…fojee Rajah 1829

THE DISOWNED.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM."

"*Corb.*—I disclaim in him !
Avoc. 1*st.*—*But for what cause ?*"
Volpone, Act 4, *Scene* 5.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON :
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

LONDON:
SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

THE DISOWNED.

CHAPTER I.

"Virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

BACON.

It is somewhat remarkable, that while Talbot was bequeathing to Clarence, as the most valuable of legacies, the doctrines of a philosophy he had acquired, perhaps too late to practice, Glendower was carrying those very

doctrines, so far as his limited sphere would allow, into the rule and exercise of his life.

Since the death of the bookseller, which we have before recorded, Glendower had been left utterly without resource. The others to whom he applied were indisposed to avail themselves of an unknown ability. The trade of book-making was not then as it is now, and if it had been, it would not have suggested itself to the high-spirited and unworldly student. Some publishers offered, it is true, a reward tempting enough for an immoral tale; others spoke of the value of an attack upon the Americans; one suggested an ode to the minister, and another hinted, that a pension might possibly be granted to one who would prove extortion not tyranny. But these insinuations fell upon a dull ear, and the tribe of Barabbas were astonished to find that an author could imagine interest and principle not synonymous.

Struggling with want, which hourly grew more imperious and urgent; wasting his heart on studies which brought fever to his pulse, and disappointment to his ambition; gnawed to the very soul by the mortifications which his poverty gave to his pride; and watching with tearless eyes, but a maddening brain, the slender form of his wife, now waxing weaker and fainter, as the canker of disease fastened upon the core of her young but blighted life, there was yet a high, though, alas! not constant consolation within him, whenever, from the troubles of this dim spot his thoughts could escape, like birds released from their cage, and lose themselves in the might, and lustre, and freedom of their native heaven.

"If the wind scatter, or the rock receive," thought he, as he looked upon his secret and treasured work, "these seeds, they were at least dispersed by a hand which asked no selfish

return, and a heart which would have lavished the harvest of its labours upon those who know not the husbandman, and trample his hopes into the dust."

But by degrees, this comfort of a noble and generous nature, these whispers of a vanity, rather to be termed holy than excusable, began to grow unfrequent and low. The cravings of a more engrossing and heavy want than those of the mind, came eagerly and rapidly upon him; the fair cheek of his infant became pinched and hollow; his wife—(O woman! in ordinary cases so mere a mortal, how, in the great and rare events of life, dost thou swell into the angel!) his wife conquered nature itself by love, and starved herself in silence, and set bread before him with a smile, and bade him eat.

"But you—you?" he would ask inquiringly, and then pause.

"I *have* dined, dearest: I want nothing; eat, love, eat."

But he eat not. The food robbed from her seemed to him more deadly than poison; and he would rise, and dash his hand to his brow, and go forth alone, with nature unsatisfied, to look upon this luxurious world, and learn *content*.

It was after such a scene that, one day, he wandered forth into the streets, desperate and confused in mind, and fainting with hunger, and half insane with fiery and wrong thoughts, which dashed over his barren and gloomy soul, and desolated, *but conquered not*. It was evening: he stood (for he had strode on so rapidly, at first, that his strength was now exhausted, and he was forced to pause), leaning against the railed area of a house, in a lone and unfrequented street. No passenger shared the dull and obscure thoroughfare. He stood, literally, in

scene as in heart, solitary amidst the great city, and wherever he looked—lo! there were none!

"Two days," said he, slowly and faintly, "two days, and bread has only once passed my lips; and that was snatched from her—from those lips which I have fed with sweet and holy kisses, and from whence my sole comfort in this weary life has been drawn. And she—ay, she starves—and my child, too. They complain not—they murmur not—but they lift up their eyes to me and ask for——. Merciful God! thou *didst* make man in benevolence; thou *dost* survey this world with a pitying and paternal eye—save, comfort, cherish them, and crush *me* if thou wilt."

At that moment a man darted suddenly from an obscure alley, and passed Glendower at full speed; presently came a cry, and a shout, and the rapid trampling of feet, and, in another mo-

ment, the solitude of the street grew instinct and massed with life.

"Where is he!" cried a hundred voices, to Glendower—"where—which road did the robber take?"—But Glendower could not answer; his nerves were unstrung, and his dizzy brain swam and reeled: and the faces which peered upon him, and the voices which shrieked and yelled in his ear, were to him as the forms and sounds of a ghastly and eltrich world. His head drooped upon his bosom—he clung to the area for support—the crowd passed on—they were in pursuit of guilt—they were thirsting after blood—they were going to fill the dungeon and feed the gibbet—what to them was the virtue they could have supported, or the famine they could have relieved? But they knew not his distress, nor the extent of his weakness, or some would have tarried and aided, for there is, after all, as much kindness as cruelty in our nature;

perhaps they thought it was only some intoxicated and maudlin idler—or, perhaps, in the heat of their pursuit, they thought not at all.

So they rolled on, and their voices died away, and their steps were hushed, and Glendower, insensible and cold as the iron he clung to, was once more alone. Slowly he revived; he opened his dim and glazing eyes, and saw the evening star break from its chamber, and, though sullied by the thick and foggy air, scatter its faint yet holy smiles, upon the polluted city.

He looked quietly on the still night, and its first watcher among the hosts of heaven, and felt something of balm sink into his soul; not, indeed, that vague and delicious calm which, in his boyhood of poesy and romance, he had drank in, by green solitudes from the mellow twilight, but a quiet, sad and sober, circling gradually over his mind, and bringing it back from

its confused and disordered visions and darkness, to the recollection and reality of his bitter life.

By degrees the scene he had so imperfectly witnessed, the flight of the robber, and the eager pursuit of the mob, grew over him: a dark and guilty thought burst upon his mind.

"I am a man, like that criminal," said he, fiercely. "I have nerves, sinews, muscles, flesh; I feel hunger, thirst, pain, as acutely; why should I endure more than he can? Perhaps he had a wife—a child—and he saw them starving inch by inch, and he felt that he *ought* to be their protector—and so he sinned.—And I—I—can I not sin too for mine? can I not dare what the wild beast, and the vulture, and the fierce hearts of my brethren dare for their mates and young? One gripe of this hand—one cry from this voice—and my board might be heaped with plenty, and my child feed, and *she* smile as she was wont to smile—for one night at least."

And as these thoughts broke upon him, Glendower rose, and with a step firm, even in weakness, he strode unconsciously onward.

A figure appeared; Glendower's heart beat thick. He slouched his hat over his brows, and for one moment wrestled with his pride and his stern virtue; the virtue conquered, but not the pride; and even the office of the suppliant seemed to him less degrading than that of the robber. He sprung forward, extended his hands towards the stranger, and cried in a sharp voice, the agony of which rung through the long dull street with a sudden and echoless sound, "Charity—food!"

The stranger paused—one of the boldest of men in his own line, he was as timid as a woman in any other; mistaking the meaning of the petitioner, and terrified by the vehemence of his gesture, he said, in a trembling tone, as he hastily pulled out his purse—

"There, there! do not hurt me—take it—take all!"

Glendower knew the voice, as a sound not unfamiliar to him; his pride, that grand principle of human action, which in him, though for a moment suppressed, was unextinguishable, returned in full force. "None," thought he, "who know me, shall know my full degradation also." And he turned away; but the stranger, mistaking this motion, extended his hand to him, saying, "Take this, my friend—you will have no need of force!" and as he advanced nearer to his supposed assailant, he beheld, by the pale lamp-light, and instantly recognized, his features.

"Ah!" cried he, in astonishment, but internal rejoicing—"ah! is it you who are thus reduced!"

"You say right, Crauford," said Glendower, sullenly, and drawing himself up to his full

height, "it is *I!* but you are mistaken;—I am a beggar, not a ruffian!"

"Good Heavens!" answered Crauford; "how fortunate that we should meet! Providence watches over us unceasingly! I have long sought you in vain. But"—(and here the wayward malignity, sometimes, though not always, the characteristic of Crauford's nature, irresistibly broke out)—"but that you, of all men, should suffer so—you, proud, susceptible, virtuous beyond human virtue—you, whose fibres are as acute as the naked eye—that *you* should bear this, and wince not!"

"You do my humanity wrong!" said Glendower, with a bitter and almost ghastly smile; "I do worse than wince!"

"Ay, is it so!" said Crauford: "have you awakened at last? Has your philosophy taken a more impassioned dye?"

"Mock me not!" cried Glendower; and his eye, usually soft in its deep thoughtfulness, glared wild and savage upon the hypocrite, who stood trembling, yet half sneering at the storm he had raised—"my passions are even now beyond my mastery—loose them not upon you!"

"Nay," said Crawford, gently, "I meant not to vex or wound you. I have sought you several times since the last night we met, but in vain: you had left your lodgings, and none knew whither. I would fain talk with you. I have a scheme to propose to you which will make you rich for ever—rich—literally rich!—not merely above poverty, but high in affluence!"

Glendower looked incredulously at the speaker, who continued—

"The scheme has danger—*that* you can dare!"

Glendower was still silent; but his set and stern countenance was sufficient reply.

"Some sacrifice of your pride," continued Crauford—"that also you can bear!" and the tempter almost grinned with pleasure as he asked the question.

"He who is poor," said Glendower, speaking at last, "has a right to pride. He who starves has it too; but he who sees those whom he loves famish, and cannot aid, has it not!"

"Come home with me, then," said Crauford; "you seem faint and weak: nature craves food—come and partake of mine—we will then talk over this scheme, and arrange its completion."

"I cannot," answered Glendower, quietly.

"And why?"

"Because *they* starve at home!"

"Heavens!" said Crauford, affected for a moment into sincerity—"it is indeed fortunate

that business should have led me here; but, meanwhile, you will not refuse this trifle—as a loan merely. By and by our scheme will make you so rich, that I must be the borrower."

Glendower *did* hesitate for a moment—he did swallow a bitter rising of the heart; but he thought of those at home, and the struggle was over.

"I thank you," said he; "I thank you for their sake: the *time may* come"—and the proud gentleman stopped short, for his desolate fortunes rose before him, and forbade all hope of the future.

"Yes!" cried Crauford, "the time may come when you will repay me this money a hundred-fold. But where do you live? You are silent. Well, you will not inform me—I understand you. Meet me, then, here, on this very spot, three nights hence—you will not fail."

"I will not," said Glendower; and pressing Crauford's hand with a generous and grateful warmth, which might have softened a heart less obdurate, he turned away.

Folding his arms, while a bitter yet joyous expression crossed his countenance, Crauford stood still, gazing upon the retreating form of the noble and unfortunate man whom he had marked for destruction.

"Now," said he, "this virtue is a fine thing, a very fine thing to talk so loftily about! A little craving of the internal juices, a little pinching of this vile body, as your philosophers and saints call our better part, and, lo! it oozes out like water through a leaky vessel, and the vessel sinks! No, no: virtue is a weak game, and a poor game, and a losing game. Why, there is that man, the very pink of integrity and rectitude, he is now only wanting temptation to fall—and he *will* fall, in a fine

phrase, too, I'll be sworn! And then, having once fallen, there will be no medium—he will become utterly corrupt; while *I*, honest Dick Crauford, doing as other wise men do, cheat a trick or two, in playing with Fortune, without being a whit the worse for it. Do I not subscribe to charities; am I not constant at church, ay, and meeting to boot; kind to my servants, obliging to my friends, loyal to my king? 'Gad, if I were less loving to myself, I should have been far less useful to my country! And, now, now, let me see what has brought me to these filthy suburbs? Ah, Madam H—— Woman, incomparable woman! on Richard Crauford thou hast made a good night's work of it hitherto!—Business seasons pleasure!" and the villain upon system moved away.

Glendower hastened to his home; it was miserably changed, even from the humble abode in which we last saw him. The unfortunate pair

had chosen their present residence from a melancholy refinement in luxury; they had chosen it, because none else shared it with them, and their famine, and pride, and struggles, and despair, were without witness or pity.

With a heavy step Glendower entered the chamber where his wife sat; when at a distance he had heard a faint moan, but as he had approached, it ceased; for she, from whom it came, knew his step, and hushed her grief and pain, that they might not add, even by an atom, to his own. The peevishness, the querulous and stinging irritations of want, came not to that affectionate and kindly heart; nor could all those biting and bitter evils of fate, which turn the love that is born of luxury into rancour and gall, scathe the beautiful and holy passion which had knit into one those two unearthly natures. They rather clung the closer to each other, as all things in heaven and earth spake in tempest or

in gloom around them, and coined their sorrows into endearment, and their looks into smiles, and strove each, from the depth of despair, to pluck hope and comfort for the other.

This, it is true, was more striking and constant in her than in Glendower; for in love, man, be he ever so generous, is always outdone. Yet even when in moments of extreme passion and conflict, the strife broke from his breast into words, never once was his discontent vented upon her, or his reproaches lavished on any but fortune or himself, or his murmurs mingled with a single breath wounding to her tenderness, or detracting from his love.

He threw open the door; the wretched light cast its sick beams over the squalid walls, foul with green damps, and the miserable yet clean bed, and the fireless hearth, and the empty board, and the pale cheek of the wife, as she rose and flung her arms round his neck, and

murmured out her joy and welcome. "There," said he, as he extricated himself from her, and flung the money, scanty as it was, upon the table, "there, love, pine no more, feed yourself and our daughter, and then let us sleep and be happy in our dreams."

A writer, one of the most gifted of the present day, has told the narrator of this history, that no interest of a high nature can be given to extreme poverty. We know not if this be true; yet if we mistake not our own feelings, there is nothing to us so exalted, or so divine, as a great and brave spirit working out its end through every earthly obstacle and evil: watching through the utter darkness, and steadily defying the phantoms which crowd around it; wrestling with the mighty allurements, and rejecting the fearful voices of that want which is the deadliest and surest of human tempters; nursing through all calamity the love

of species, and the warmer and closer affections of private ties; sacrificing no duty, resisting all sin; and amidst every horror and every humiliation, feeding the still and bright light of that genius which, like the lamp of the fabulist, though it may waste itself for years amidst the depth of solitude, and the silence of the tomb, shall live and burn immortal and undimmed, when all around it is rottenness and decay.

And yet we confess that it is a painful and bitter task to record the humiliations, the wearing, petty, stinging humiliations of poverty; to count the drops as they slowly fall, one by one, upon the fretted and indignant heart; to particularize, with the scrupulous and nice hand of indifference, the minutest segments, the fractional and divided moments in the dial-plate of misery; to behold the delicacies of birth, the masculine pride of blood, the dignities of intellect, the wealth of knowledge, the feminacies and

graces of womanhood — all that ennoble and soften the stony mass of common places which *is* our life, frittered into atoms, trampled into the dust and mire of the meanest thoroughfares of distress; life and soul, the energies and aims of man, ground into one prostrating want, cramped into one levelling sympathy with the dregs and refuse of his kind, blistered into a single galling and festering sore: this is, we own, a painful and a bitter task; but it hath its redemption: a pride even in debasement, a pleasure even in woe: and it is therefore that while we have abridged, we have not shunned it. There are some whom the lightning of fortune blasts, only to render holy. Amidst all that humbles and scathes—amidst all that shatters from their life its verdure, smites to the dust the pomp and summit of their pride, and in the very heart of existence writeth a sudden and "strange defeature," *they* stand erect, riven, not uprooted, a monument less of pity

than of awe. There are some who, exalted by a spirit above all casualty and woe, seem to throw over the most degrading circumstance the halo of an innate and consecrating power; the very things which, seen alone, are despicable and vile, associated with them, become almost venerable and divine; and some portion, however dim and feeble, of that intense holiness which, in the INFANT GOD, shed majesty over the manger and the straw, not denied to those who, in the depth of affliction, cherish the Angel Virtue at their hearts, flings over the meanest localities of earth an emanation from the glory of Heaven.

CHAPTER II.

"Letters of divers hands, which will absolve
"Ourselves from long narration."

Tanner of Tyburn.

One morning, about a fortnight after Talbot's death, Clarence was sitting alone, thoughtful and melancholy, when the three following letters were put into his hand:—

LETTER I.

FROM THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

"Let me, my dear Linden, be the first to congratulate you upon your accession of fortune: five thousand a year, Scarsdale, and eighty thousand pounds in the funds, are very pretty

foes to starvation! Ah, my dear fellow, if you had but shot that "frosty Caucasus" of humanity, that pillar of the state, made not to bend, that—but you know already whom I mean, and so I will spare you more of my lamentable metaphors: had you shot Lord Borodaile, your happiness would now be complete. Every body talks of your luck. La Meronville tending on you with her white hands, the prettiest hands in the world—who would not be wounded, even by Lord Borodaile, for such a nurse? And then Talbot's—yet, I will not speak of *that*, for you are very unlike the present generation; and who knows but you may have some gratitude, some affection, some natural feeling in you. I had once; but that was before I went to France—those Parisians, with their fine sentiments, and witty philosophy, play the devil with one's good old-fashioned feelings. So Lord Aspeden is to have an

Italian ministry. How delightful for the southern rascals! Will *he* not, like their own autumns, wither and chill with the gentlest air imaginable? By-the-by, shall you go with him, or will you not rather stay at home, and enjoy your new fortunes—hunt—race—dine out—dance—vote in the House of Commons, and, in short, do all that an Englishman and a gentleman should do? *Ornamento e splendor del secol nostro.* Let me have the reversion of La Meronville, that is, if she will be *reverted.* Write me a line whenever you have nothing better to do.

"And believe me,

"Most truly yours,

"HAVERFIELD.

"Will you sell your black mare, or will you buy my brown one? *Utrum horum mavis accipe,* the only piece of Latin I remember."

LETTER FROM LORD ASPEDEN.

"My dear Linden,

"Suffer me to enter most fully into your feelings. Death, my friend, is common to all: we must submit to its dispensations. I heard accidentally of the great fortune left you by Mr. Talbot, your father, I suppose I may venture to call him. Indeed, though there is a silly prejudice against illegitimacy, yet, as our immortal bard says,

> "Wherefore base?
> When thy dimensions are as well compact,
> Thy mind as generous and thy shape as true
> As honest madam's issue!"

For my part, my dear Linden, I say, on your behalf, that it is very likely that you *are* a natural son, for such are always the luckiest and the best. Ah! we, who are of the *corps diplomatique*, know well how to turn a compliment.

"You have probably heard of the honour his majesty has conferred upon me, in appointing to my administration the city of ——. As the choice of a secretary has been left to me, I need not say how happy I shall be to keep my promise to you. Indeed, as I told Lord —— yesterday morning, I do not know any where a young man who has more talent, to say nothing of your skill on the flute. But, my dear young friend, there are sad whispers about your morality and your acquaintance with that notorious Frenchwoman. Now you see, Linden, that we, who know *les usages du monde et les murs de la cour*, we, of the *corps diplomatique*, are not very scrupulous in these matters; but we must humour the vulgar, and love, as our illustrious Shakspeare says, 'wisely, not too well.' A hint will, I know, be sufficient to a young gentleman of your sense and discretion, for the Swan of Avon has very prettily sung, 'Thou wast a pretty fellow, when thou hadst no

need to care for her frowning; now thou art an O without a figure; I am better than thou art now. I am a fool—thou art nothing!'

"Adieu, my dear young friend; you will, I know, appreciate this advice.

"And believe me,

"Very truly, yours,

"ASPEDEN."

LETTER FROM MADAME DE LA MERONVILLE.

(Translated.)

"You have done me wrong—great wrong. I loved you—I waited on you—tended you—nursed you—gave all up for you; and you forsook me—forsook me without a word. True, that you have been engaged in a melancholy duty, but, at least, you had time to write a line, to cast a thought, to one who had shewn for you the love that I have done. But we will

pass over all this; I will not reproach you—it is beneath me. The vicious upbraid—*the virtuous forgive!* I have, for several days, left your house. I should never have come to it, had you not been wounded, and, as I fondly imagined, for my sake. Return when you will, I shall no longer be there to persecute and torment you.

"Pardon this letter. I have said too much for myself—a hundred times too much to you; but I shall not sin again. This intrusion is my last.

"CECILE DE LA MERONVILLE."

These letters will, probably, suffice to clear up that part of Clarence's history which had not hitherto been touched upon; they will shew that Talbot's will (after several legacies to his old servants, his nearest connexions, and two charitable institutions, which he had founded,

and for some years supported) had bequeathed the bulk of his property to Clarence. The words in which the bequest was made, were kind, and somewhat remarkable.—" To my relation and friend, commonly known by the name of Clarence Linden, to whom I am bound alike by blood and affection," &c.—These expressions, joined to the magnitude of the bequest, the apparently unaccountable attachment of the old man to his heir, and the mystery which wrapt the origin of the latter, all concurred to give rise to an opinion, easily received, and soon universally accredited, that Clarence was a natural son of the deceased; and so strong in England is the aristocratic aversion to an unknown lineage, that this belief, unflattering as it was, procured for Linden a much higher consideration, on the score of birth, than he might otherwise have enjoyed. Furthermore, will the above correspondence testify the general *éclat* of Madame La

Meronville's attachment, and the construction naturally put upon it. Nor do we see much left for us to explain, with regard to the Frenchwoman herself, which cannot equally well be gleaned by any judicious and intelligent reader, from the epistle last honoured by his perusal. Clarence's conscience did, indeed, smite him severely, for his negligence and ill requital to one, who, whatever her faults or follies, had at least done nothing with which *he* had a right to reproach her. It must, however, be considered, in his defence, that the fatal event which had so lately occurred, the relapse which Clarence had suffered in consequence, and the melancholy confusion and bustle in which the last week or ten days had been passed, were quite sufficient to banish her from his remembrance. Still she was a woman, and had loved, or seemed to love; and Clarence, as he wrote to her a long, kind, and almost brotherly letter, in return for her own,

felt that, in giving pain to another, one often suffers as much for avoiding as for committing a sin.

We have said his letter was kind—it was also frank, and yet prudent. In it he said that he had long loved another—which love alone could have rendered him insensible to her attachment; that he, nevertheless, should always recal her memory with equal interest and admiration; and then, with a tact of flattery which the nature of the correspondence and the sex of the person addressed rendered excusable, he endeavoured, as far as he was able, to soothe and please the vanity which the candour of his avowal was calculated to wound.

When he had finished this letter, he despatched another to Lord Aspeden, claiming a reprieve of some days before he answered the proposal of the diplomatist. After these epistolary efforts, he summoned his valet, and told him,

apparently in a careless tone, to find out if Lady Westborough was still in town. Then throwing himself on the couch, he wrestled with the grief and melancholy which the death of a friend, and more than a father, might well cause in a mind less susceptible than his, and counted the dull hours crawl onward till his servant returned. "Lady Westborough and all the family had been gone a week to their seat in———"

"Well," thought Clarence, "had *he* been alive, I could have entrusted my cause to a mediator; as it is, I will plead, or rather assert it, myself.—Harrison," said he aloud, "see that my black mare is ready by sun-rise to-morrow; I shall leave town for some days."

"Not in your present state of health, Sir, surely," said Harrison, with the license of one who had been a nurse.

"Allow me to make my own plans," answered Clarence, haughtily. "See that I am obeyed.'

And Harrison, wondering and crest-fallen, left the room.

"Rich, independent, free to aspire to the heights which in England are only accessible to those who join wealth to ambition, I have at least," said Clarence, proudly, "no unworthy pretensions even to the hand of Lady Flora Ardenne. If she can love me for myself, if she can trust to my honour, rely on my love, feel proud in my pride, and aspiring in my ambition, then, indeed, this wealth will be welcome to me, and the disguised name, which has cost me so many mortifications, become grateful, since she will not disdain to share it."

CHAPTER III.

> "A little druid wight,
> Of withered aspect; but his eye was keen
> With sweetness mixed—in russet *brown* bedight."
>
> THOMSON'S *Castle of Indolence.*

> "Thus holding high discourse, they came to where
> The cursed carle was at his wonted trade,
> Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
> In witching wise, as I before have said."
>
> *Ibid.*

IT was a fine, joyous summer morning when Clarence set out, alone, and on horseback, upon his enterprise of love and adventure. If there be anything on earth more reviving and inspiriting than another, it is, to our taste, a bright day, a free horse, a journey of excitement before us,

and loneliness. Rousseau—in his own way, a great, though rather a morbid epicure of this world's enjoyments—talks with rapture of his pedestrian rambles when in his first youth. But what are your foot-ploddings, your ambulating rejoicings, to the free etherealities which our courser's light bound and exultant spurnings of the dull earth bring to the spirit! For our own parts, we do not love to touch the sordid clay, the mean soil, to which we gravitate—we do not love that the mire, and the dust, and the stony roughness of the plebeian and vulgar sod, from whence spring all the fleshy and grovelling particles of our frame, should weary the limbs and exhaust the strength, and make the free blood grow languid with a coarse fatigue. If we must succumb to the power of weariness, let it come by the buoyant and rushing streams of the air, through which we can cleave without touching the meaner element below; let it come by the continuity of

conquest over the noble slave we have mastered to our will, and not by the measured labour of planting one jaded step after another upon this insensate earth.

But there are times when an iron and stern sadness locks, as it were, within itself our capacities of enjoyment; and the song of the birds, and the green freshness of the summer morning, and the glad motion of his generous steed, brought neither relief nor change to the musings of the young adventurer.

He rode on for several miles without noticing any thing on his road, and only now and then testifying the nature of his thoughts and his consciousness of solitude by brief and abrupt exclamations and sentences, which proclaimed the melancholy yet exciting subjects of his meditations. During the heat of the noon, he rested at a small public house about * * * miles from town; and resolving to take his horse at least ten

miles further before his day's journey ceased, he remounted towards the evening, and slowly resumed his way.

He was now entering the same county in which he first made his appearance in this history. Although several miles from the spot on which the memorable night with the gipsies had been passed, his thoughts reverted to its remembrance, and he sighed as he recalled the eager hopes which then fed and animated his heart. While thus musing, he heard the sound of hoofs behind him, and presently came by a sober looking man, on a rough strong pony, laden (beside its master's weight) with saddle bags of uncommon size, and to all appearance substantially and artfully filled.

Clarence looked, and, after a second survey, recognized the person of his old acquaintance, Mr. Morris Brown. Not equally reminiscent was the worshipful itinerant, who, in the great variety of forms and faces which it was his profes-

sional lot to encounter, could not be expected to preserve a very nice or distinguishing recollection of each.

"Your servant, Sir, your servant," said Mr. Brown, as he rode his pony alongside of our traveller. "Are you going as far as W—— this evening?"

"I hardly know yet," answered Clarence; "the length of my ride depends upon my horse rather than myself."

"Oh, well, very well," said Mr. Brown: "but you will allow me, perhaps, Sir, the honour of riding with you as far as you go."

"You give me much gratification by your proposal, Mr. Brown!" said Clarence.

The broker looked in surprise at his companion. "So you know me, Sir!"

"I do," replied Clarence. "I am surprised that you have forgotten *me*."

Slowly Mr. Brown gazed, till at last his memory began to give itself the rousing shake—

"God bless me, Sir, I beg you a thousand pardons—I now remember you perfectly—Mr. Linden, the nephew of my old patroness Mrs. Minden.—Dear, dear, how could I be so forgetful! I hope, by the by, Sir, that the shirts wore well. I am thinking you will want some more. I have some capital cambric, of curiously fine quality and texture, from the wardrobe of the late Lady Waddilove."

"What, Lady Waddilove still!" cried Clarence. "Why, my good friend, you will offer next to furnish me with pantaloons from her ladyship's wardrobe."

"Why, really, Sir, I see you preserve your fine spirits; but I do think I have one or two pair of plum-coloured velvet inexpressibles, that passed into my possession when her ladyship's husband died, which might, perhaps, with a *leetle* alteration, fit you, and, at all events, would be a

very elegant present from a gentleman to his valet."

"Well, Mr. Brown, whenever I or my valet wear plum-coloured velvet breeches, I will certainly purchase those in your possession; but, to change the subject, can you inform me what have become of my old host and hostess, the Copperasses, of Copperas Bower?"

"Oh, Sir, they are the same as ever—nice *genteel* people they are, too. Master Adolphus has grown into a fine young gentleman, very nearly as tall as *you* and *I* are. His worthy father preserves his jovial vein, and is very merry whenever I call there. Indeed, it was but last week that he made an admirable witticism. 'Bob,' said he—(Tom—you remember Tom, or De Warens, as Mrs. Copperas was pleased to call him—Tom is gone)—'Bob, have you stopt the coach?' 'Yes, Sir,' said Bob.

'And what coach is it?' asked Mr. Copperas. 'It be the Swallow, Sir,' said the boy. 'The Swallow! oh, very well,' cried Mr. Copperas; 'then, now, having swallowed in the roll, I will e'en roll in the Swallow!'—Ha! ha! ha! Sir, very facetious, was it not?"

"Very, indeed," said Clarence; "and so Mr. De Warens has gone; how came that?"

"Why, Sir, you see, the boy was always of a *gay turn*, and he took to frisking it, as he called it, of a night, and so he was taken up for thrashing a watchman, and appeared before Sir John, the magistrate, the next morning."

"Caractacus before Cæsar!" observed Linden; "and what said Cæsar?"

"Sir!" said Mr. Brown.

"I mean, what said Sir John?"

"Oh! he asked him his name, and Tom, whose head Mrs. Copperas (poor good woman!) had crammed with pride enough for fifty foot-

boys, replied, 'De Warens,' with all the air of a man of independence. 'De Warens!' cried Sir John, amazed, 'we'll have no De's here; take him to Bridewell!' and so Mrs. Copperas, being without a foot-boy, she sent for me, and I supplied her with *Bob*."

"Out of the late Lady Waddilove's wardrobe too?" said Clarence.

"Ha, ha! that's well, very well, Sir. No, *not exactly*, but he was a son of her late ladyship's coachman. Mr. Copperas has had two other servants of the name of Bob before, but this is the biggest of all, so he humorously calls him 'Triple Bob Major.' You observe that road to the right, Sir—it leads to the mansion of an old customer of mine, General Cornelius St. Leger; many a good bargain have I sold to his sister. Heaven rest her!—when she died, I lost a good friend, though she was a little hot or so, to be sure. But she had a relation, a

young lady—such a lovely, noble looking creature—it did one's heart, ay, and one's eyes also, good to look at her; and she's gone too—well, well, one loses one's customers sadly; it makes me feel old and comfortless to think of it. Now, yonder, as far as you can see among those distant woods, lived another friend of mine, to whom I offered to make some very valuable presents upon his marriage with the young lady I spoke of just now; but, poor gentleman, he had not time to accept them; he lost his property by a law-suit, a few months after he was married, and a very different person now has Mordaunt Court."

"Mordaunt Court!" cried Clarence; "do you mean to say that Mr. Mordaunt has lost that property?"

"Why, Sir, one Mr. Mordaunt has lost it, and another has gained it: but the real Mr. Mordaunt has not an acre in this county or else-

where, I fear, poor gentleman. He is universally regretted, for he was very good and very generous, though they say he was also mighty proud and reserved; but, for my part, I never perceived it. If one is not proud oneself, Mr. Linden, one is very little apt to be hurt by pride in other people."

"And where is Mr. Mordaunt?" asked Clarence, as he recalled his interview with that person, and the interest with which Algernon then inspired him.

"That, Sir, is more than any of us can say. He has disappeared altogether. Some declare that he has gone abroad, others that he is living in Wales in the greatest poverty. However, wherever he is, I am sure that he cannot be rich; for the law-suit quite ruined him, and the young lady he married had not a farthing."

"Poor Mordaunt!" said Clarence, musingly.

"I think, Sir, that the squire would not be best pleased if he heard you pity him. I don't know why; but he certainly looked, walked, and moved like one whom you felt it very hard to pity. But I am thinking that it is a great shame that the general should not do any thing for Mr. Mordaunt's wife, for she was his own flesh and blood; and I am sure *he* had no cause to be angry at her marrying a gentleman of such old family as Mr. Mordaunt. I am a great stickler for birth, Sir—I learnt that from the late Lady W. 'Brown,' she said, and I shall never forget her ladyship's air when she did say it, 'Brown, respect your superiors, and never fall into the hands of the republicans and atheists!'"

"And why," said Clarence, who was much interested in Mordaunt's fate, "did General St. Leger withhold his consent?"

"That we don't exactly know, Sir; but

some say, that Mr. Mordaunt was very high and proud with the general, and the general was, to the full, as fond of his purse as Mr. Mordaunt could be of his pedigree—and so, I suppose, one pride clashed against the other, and made a quarrel between them."

"Would not the general, then, relent after the marriage?"

"Oh! no, Sir—for it was a runaway affair. Miss Diana St. Leger, his sister, was as hot as ginger upon it, and fretted and worried the poor general, who was never of the mildest, about the match, till at last he forbade the poor young lady's very name to be mentioned. And when Miss Diana died about two years ago, he suddenly introduced a tawny sort of *cretur*, whom they call a mulatto or creole, or some such thing, into the house; and it seems that he has had several children by her, whom he never durst own during Miss Diana's life, but whom

he now declares to be his heirs. Well—they rule him with a rod of iron, and suck him as dry as an orange. They are a bad, griping set, all of them; and, I am sure, I don't say so from any selfish feeling, Mr. Linden, though they have forbid me the house, and called me, to my very face, an old, cheating Jew. Think of *that*, Sir!—I, whom the late Lady W———, in her exceeding friendship, used to call 'honest Brown'—I whom your worthy —"

"And who," uncourteously interrupted Clarence, "has Mordaunt Court now?"

"Why, a distant relation of the last squire's, an elderly gentleman, who calls himself Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt. I am going there to-morrow morning, for I still keep up a connection with the family Indeed the old gentleman bought a lovely little ape of me, which I did intend as a present to the late (as I may call him) Mr.

Mordaunt; so, though I will not say I exactly like him—he is a hard hand at a bargain—yet at least I will not deny him his due."

"What sort of person is he? What character does he bear?" asked Clarence.

"I really find it hard to answer that question," said the gossiping Mr. Brown. "In great things he is very lavish and ostentatious, but in small things he is very penurious and saving, and miser-like—and all for one son, who is deformed, and very sickly. He seems to doat on that boy; and now I have got two or three little presents in these bags for Mr. Henry. God forgive me, but when I look at the poor creature, with his face all drawn up, and his sour, ill-tempered voice, and his limbs crippled, I almost think it would be better if he were in his grave, and the rightful Mr. Mordaunt, who would then be the next heir, in his place."

"So, then, there is only this unhappy cripple

A29.3

between Mr. Mordaunt and the property !" said Clarence.

"No, Sir, there is not. But will you let me ask where you shall put up at W——? I will wait upon you, if you will give me leave, with some very curious and valuable articles, highly desirable either for yourself or for little presents to your friends."

"I thank you," said Clarence, "I shall make no stay at W——, but I shall be glad to see you in town next week. Favour me—meanwhile, by accepting this trifle—"

"Nay, nay, Sir," said Mr. Brown, pocketing the money—"I really cannot accept this—any thing in the way of exchange—a ring, or a seal, or—"

"No, no, not at present," said Clarence; "the night is coming on, and I shall make the best of my way. Goodbye, Mr. Brown:" and Clarence trotted off; but he had scarce got sixty

yards before he heard the itinerant merchant cry out—" Mr. Linden, Mr. Linden," and looking back, he beheld the honest Brown putting his shaggy pony at full speed, in order to overtake him. So he pulled up.

" Well, Mr. Brown, what do you want?"

" Why, you see, Sir, you gave me no exact answer about the plum-coloured velvet inexpressibles," said Mr. Brown.

CHAPTER IV.

"Are we contemned?"
The Double Marriage.

It was dusk when Clarence arrived at the very same inn at which, more than five years ago, he had assumed his present name. As he recalled the note addressed to him, and the insignificant sum (his whole fortune) which it contained, he could not help smiling at the change his fortunes had since then undergone: but the smile soon withered when he thought of the kind and paternal hand from which that change had proceeded, and knew that his gratitude was

no longer availing, and that that hand, in pouring its last favours upon him, had become cold. He was ushered into No. 4, and left to his meditations till bed time.

The next day he recommenced his journey. Westborough Park was, though in another county, within a short ride of W——; but as he approached it, the character of the scenery became essentially changed. Bare, bold, and meagre, the features of the country bore somewhat of a Scottish character. On the right side of the road was a precipitous and perilous descent, and some workmen were placing posts along a path for foot-passengers on that side nearest the carriage-road, probably with a view to preserve unwary coachmen or equestrians from the dangerous vicinity to the descent, which a dark night might cause them to incur. As Clarence looked idly on the workmen, and painfully on the crumbling and fearful descent

we have described, he little thought that that spot would, a few years after, become the scene of a catastrophe affecting in the most powerful degree the interests of his future life. Our young traveller put up his horse at a small inn bearing the Westborough arms, and situated at a short distance from the park gates. Now that he was so near his mistress—now that less than an hour, nay, than the fourth part of an hour, might place him before her, and decide his fate, his heart, which had hitherto sustained him, grew faint, and presented, first fear, then anxiety, and, at last, despondency to his imagination and forebodings.

"At all events," said he, "I will see her alone before I will confer with her artful and proud mother, or her cipher of a father. I will then tell her all my history, and open to her all my secrets: I will only conceal from her my present fortunes, for even if rumour should have informed her of them, it will be easy to give the

report no sanction; I have a right to that trial. When she is convinced that, at least, neither my birth nor character can disgrace her, I shall see if her love can enable her to overlook my supposed poverty, and to share my uncertain lot. If so, there will be some triumph in undeceiving her error and rewarding her generosity: if not, I shall be saved from involving my happiness with that of one who looks only to my worldly possessions. I owe it to her, it is true, to shew her that I am no low-born pretender; but I owe it also to myself to ascertain if my own individual qualities are sufficient to gain her hand."

Fraught with these ideas, which were natural enough to a man whose personal beauty had received such universal homage as Clarence's had—whose peculiar circumstances were well calculated to make him feel rather soured and suspicious, and whose pride had been severely wounded by the contempt with which his letter

had been treated—Clarence walked into the park, and, hovering around the house, watched and waited that opportunity of addressing Lady Flora, which he trusted her habits of walking would afford him; but hours rolled away, the evening set in, and Lady Flora had not once quitted the house.

More disappointed and sick at heart than he liked to confess, Clarence returned to his inn, took his solitary meal, and strolling once more into the park, watched beneath the windows till midnight, endeavouring to guess which were the casements of her apartments, and feeling his heart beat high at every light which flashed forth, and disappeared, and every form which flitted across the windows of the great staircase. Little did Lady Flora, as she sat in her room alone, and in tears, mused over Clarence's fancied worthlessness and infidelity, and told her heart again and again that she loved no more—little

did she know whose eye kept vigils without, or whose feet brushed away the rank dews beneath her windows, or whose thoughts, though not altogether unmingled with reproach, were rivetted with all the ardour of a young and first love upon her.

It was unfortunate for Linden that he had no opportunity of personally pleading his suit; his altered form and faded countenance would at least have insured a hearing and an interest for his honest though somewhat haughty sincerity; but though that day, and the next, and the next, were passed in the most anxious and unremitting vigilance, Clarence only once caught a glimpse of Lady Flora, and then she was one amidst a large party; and Clarence, fearful of a premature and untimely discovery, was forced to retire into the thicknesses of the park, and lose the solitary reward of his watches almost as soon as he had won it.

Wearied and racked by his suspense, and despairing of obtaining any favourable opportunity for an interview, without such a request, Clarence at last resolved to write to Lady Flora, entreating her assent to a meeting, in which he pledged himself to clear up all that had hitherto seemed doubtful in his conduct or mysterious in his character. Though respectful, urgent, and bearing the impress of truth and feeling, the tone of the letter was certainly that of a man who conceived he had a right to a little resentment for the past, and a little confidence for the future. It was what might well be written by one who imagined his affection had once been returned, but would as certainly have been deemed very presumptuous by a lady who thought that the affection itself was a liberty.

Having penned this epistle, the next care was how to convey it. After much deliberation, it was at last committed to the care of a little girl,

the daughter of the lodge-keeper, whom Lady Flora thrice a week personally instructed in the mysteries of spelling, reading, and calligraphy. With many injunctions to deliver the letter only to the hands of the beautiful teacher, Clarence trusted his dispatches to the little scholar, and, with a trembling frame, and wistful eye, watched Susan take her road, with her green satchel and her shining cheeks, to the great house.

One hour, two hours, three hours, passed, and the messenger had not returned. Restless and impatient, Clarence walked back to his inn, and had not been there many minutes before a servant, in the Westborough livery, appeared at the door of the humble hostel, and left the following letter for his perusal and gratification.

"Sir,

"The letter intended for my daughter, has just been given to me by Lady Westborough.

I know not what gave rise to the language, or the very extraordinary request for a clandestine meeting, which you have thought proper to address to Lady Flora Ardenne; but you will allow me to observe, that if you intended to confer upon my daughter the honour of a matrimonial proposal, she fully concurs with me and her mother in the negative which I feel necessitated to put upon your obliging offer.

"I need not add, that all correspondence with my daughter must close here. I have the honour to be,

"Sir,

"Your very obedient servant,

"WESTBOROUGH."

"Westborough Park.

"To Clarence Linden, Esq."

Had Clarence's blood been turned to fire, his veins could not have swelled and burnt with a

fiercer heat than they did, as he read the above letter—a masterpiece, perhaps, in the line of what may be termed the "d——d civil" of epistolary favours.

"Insufferable arrogance!" he muttered within his teeth. "I will live to pay this. Perfidious, unfeeling woman—what an escape I have had of her!—Now, now, I am on the world, and alone, thank Heaven. I will accept Aspeden's offer, and leave this country; when I return, it shall not be as a humble suitor to Lady Flora Ardenne. Pish!—how the name sickens me: but come, I have a father—at least a nominal one. He is old and weak, and may die before I return. I will see him once more, and then, heigh for Italy! Oh! I am so happy—so happy at my freedom and escape. What, ho!—waiter—my horse, instantly!"

CHAPTER V.

"*Lucr.*—What has thy father done?
Beat.—What have I done?
Am I not innocent?"

The Cenci.

The twilight was darkening slowly over a room of noble dimensions, and costly fashion. Although it was the height of summer, a low fire burnt in the grate; and, stretching his hands over the feeble flame, an old man, of about sixty, sate in an arm chair, curiously carved with armorial bearings. The dim, yet fitful flame cast its upward light upon a countenance, stern, haughty, and repellant,

where the passions of youth and manhood had dug themselves graves in many an iron line and deep furrow; the forehead, though high, was narrow and compressed—the brows sullenly overhung the eyes, and the nose, which was singularly prominent and decided, age had sharpened, and brought out, as it were, till it gave a stubborn and very forbidden expression to the more sunken features over which it rose with exaggerated dignity. Two bottles of wine, a few dried preserves, and a water glass, richly chased and ornamented with gold, showed that the inmate of the apartment had passed the hour of the principal repast, and his loneliness, at a time usually social, seemed to indicate that few olive branches were accustomed to overshadow his table.

The windows of the dining-room reached to the ground, and without, the closing light just enabled one to see a thick copse of wood, which,

at a very brief interval of turf, darkened immediately opposite the house. While the old man was thus bending over the fire, and conning his evening contemplations, a figure stole from the copse we have mentioned, and approaching the window, looked pryingly into the apartment; then with a noiseless hand it opened the spring of the casement, which was framed on a peculiar and old-fashioned construction, that required a practised and familiar touch—entered the apartment, and crept on, silent and unperceived by the inhabitant of the room, till it paused and stood motionless, with folded arms, scarce three steps behind the high back of the old man's chair.

In a few minutes the latter moved from his position, and slowly rose; the abruptness with which he turned, brought the dark figure of the intruder full and suddenly before him; he

started back, and cried, in an alarmed tone—

"Who is there?"

The stranger made no reply.

The old man, in a voice in which anger and pride mingled with fear, repeated the question. The figure advanced, dropped the cloak in which it was wrapt, and presenting the features of Clarence Linden, said, in a low but clear tone,

"Your son!"

The old man dropped his hold of the bell-rope, which he had just before seized, and leaned as if for support against the oak wainscoat; Clarence approached.

"Yes!" said he, mournfully, "your unfortunate, your offending, but your guiltless son. More than five years I have been banished from your house; I have been thrown, while yet a boy, without friends, without guidance, without

name upon the wide world, and to the mercy of chance. I come now to you as a man, claiming no assistance, and uttering no reproach, but to tell you that him whom an earthly father rejected, God has preserved; that without one unworthy or debasing act, I have won for myself the friends who support, and the wealth which dignifies (since it renders independent) life. Through all the disadvantages I have struggled against, I have preserved, unimpaired, my honour, and unsullied my conscience; you have disowned, but you might have claimed me without shame. Father, these hands are pure!"

A strong and evident emotion shook the old man's frame. He raised himself to his full height, which was still tall and commanding, and, in a voice, the natural harshness of which was rendered yet more repellant by passion, replied, "Boy! your presumption is insuf-

ferable. What to me is your wretched fate? Go—go—go to your miserable mother; find her out—claim kindred there; live together, toil together, rot together; but come not to me—disgrace to my house—ask not admittance to my affections; the law may give you my name, but sooner would I be torn piece-meal than own your right to it. If you want money, name the sum, take it; cut up my fortune to shreds—seize my property—revel on it—but come not *here*. This house is sacred; pollute it not: I disown you; I discard you; I—ay, I detest—I loathe you!"

And with these words, which came forth as if heaved from the inmost heart of the speaker, who shook with the fury he endeavoured to stifle, he fell back into his chair, and fixed his eyes, which glared fearfully through the increasing darkness upon Linden, who stood, high, erect, and sorrowfully before him!

"Unhappy old man!" said Clarence: "have not the years which have seared your form and whitened your locks, brought some meekness to your rancour, some mercy to your injustice, for one whose only crime against you seems to have been his birth. But, I said, I came not to reproach—nor do I. Many a bitter hour, many a pang of shame, and mortification, and misery, which have made scars in my heart that will never wear away, my wrongs have cost me—but let them pass. Let them not swell your future and last account whenever it be required. I am about to leave this country, with a heavy and foreboding heart; we may never meet again on earth. I have no longer any wish, any chance of resuming the name you have deprived me of. I shall never thrust myself on your relationship, or cross your view. Lavish your wealth upon him whom you have placed so immeasurably above

me in your affections. But, I have not deserved your curse, father; give me your blessing, and let me depart in peace."

"Peace! and what peace have I had? what respite from gnawing shame, the foulness and leprosy of humiliation and reproach, since—since—? But this is not your fault, you say: no, no—it is another's; and you are only the mark of my stigma, my disgrace, not its perpetrator. Ha! a nice distinction, truly. My blessing, you say! Come, kneel; kneel, boy, and have it!"

Clarence approached, and stood bending and bareheaded before his father, but he knelt not.

"Why do you not kneel?" cried the old man, vehemently.

"It is the attitude of the injurer, not of the injured!" said Clarence, firmly.

"Injured!—insolent reprobate — Is it not I who am injured? Do you not read it in my

brow—here, here?" and the old man struck his clenched hand violently against his temples. "Was I not injured"—(he continued, sinking his voice into a key unnaturally low)—"did I not trust implicitly?—did I not give up my heart without suspicion?—was I not duped deliciously?—was I not kind enough, blind enough, fool enough—and was I not betrayed—damnably, filthily betrayed? But that was *no* injury. Was not my old age turned into a drought, a sapless tree, a poisoned spring?—were not my days made a curse to me, and my nights a torture?—was I not, am I not, a mock, and a bye-word, and a miserable, impotent, unavenged, old man? Injured!—but this is no injury!—Boy, boy, what are your wrongs to mine!"

"Father!" cried Clarence, deprecatingly, "I am not the cause of your wrongs; is it just that the innocent should suffer for the guilty?"

"Speak not in that voice!" cried the old man —"that voice! — fie, fie on it. Hence! away!—away, boy!—why tarry you? — my son, and have that voice?—Pooh, you are *not* my son. Ha, ha!—*my* son!"

"What am I, then?" said Clarence, soothingly; for he was shocked and grieved, rather than irritated, by a wrath which partook so strongly of insanity.

"I will tell you," cried the father—"I will tell you what you are—you are my curse!"

"Farewell!" said Clarence, much agitated, and retiring to the window by which he had entered; "may your heart never smite you for your cruelty! Farewell!—may the blessing you have withheld from me, be with you!"

"Stop!—stay!" cried the father; for his fury was checked for one moment, and his nature, fierce as it was, relented: but Clarence

was already gone, and the miserable old man was left alone to darkness, and solitude, and the passions which can make a hell of the human heart!

CHAPTER VI.

> "Sed quæ præclara, et prospera tanti,
> Ut rebus lætis par sit mensura malorum."
>
> JUVENAL.

WE are now transported to a father and a son of a very different stamp.

IT was about the hour of one, P. M., when the door of Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt's study was thrown open, and the servant announced Mr. Brown.

"Your servant, Sir — your servant, Mr. Henry," said the itinerant, bowing low to the two gentlemen thus addressed. The former,

Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt, might be about the same age as Linden's father. A shrewd, sensible, ambitious man of the world, he had made his way from the state of a younger brother, with no fortune and very little interest, to considerable wealth, besides the property he had acquired by law, and to a degree of consideration for general influence and personal ability, which, considering he had no official or parliamentary rank, very few of his equals enjoyed. Persevering, steady, crafty, and possessing, to an eminent degree, that happy art of '*canting*' which is the great secret of earning character and consequence in England, the rise and reputation of Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt appeared less to be wondered at than envied; yet, even envy was only for those who could not look beyond the surface of things. He was at heart an anxious and unhappy man. The evil we do in the world is often paid back in the bosom of home.

Mr. Vavavour Mordaunt was, like Crauford, what might be termed a mistaken utilitarian: he had lived utterly and invariably for self; but instead of uniting self-interest with the interest of others, he considered them as perfectly incompatible ends. But character was among the greatest of all objects to him; so that, though he had rarely deviated into what might fairly be termed a virtue, he had never transgressed what might rigidly be called a propriety. He had not the genius, the wit, the moral audacity of Crauford: he could not have indulged in one offence with impunity, by a mingled courage and hypocrisy, in veiling others—he was the slave of the formula which Crauford subjugated to himself. He was only so far resembling Crauford as one man of the world resembles another in selfishness and dissimulation: he could be dishonest, not villanous, much less a villain upon system. He was a *canter*, Crauford

an *hypocrite:* his uttered opinions were, like Crauford's, differing from his conduct; but he *believed* the truth of the former even while sinning in the latter: he canted so sincerely that the tears came in his eyes when he spoke. Never was there a man more exemplary in words: people who departed from him went away impressed with the idea of an excess of honour—a plethora of conscience. "It was almost a pity," said they, "that Mr. Vavasour was so romantic;" and thereupon they named him as executor to their wills, and guardian to their sons. None but he could have carried the law-suit against Mordaunt, and lost nothing in reputation by it. But there was something so specious, so ostensibly fair in his manner and words, while he was ruining Mordaunt, that it was impossible not to suppose he was actuated by the purest motives, the most holy desire for justice—not for himself,

he said, for he was old, and already rich enough, but for his son. From that son came the punishment of all his offences—the black drop at the bottom of a bowl, seemingly so sparkling. To him, as the father grew old, and desirous of quiet, Vavasour had transferred all his selfishness, as if to a securer and more durable firm. The child, when young, had been singularly handsome and intelligent; and Vavasour, as he toiled and toiled at his ingenious and graceful cheateries, pleased himself with anticipating the importance and advantages the heir to his labours would enjoy. For that son he certainly *had* persevered more arduously than otherwise he might have done in the lawsuit, of the justice of which he better satisfied the world than his own breast; for that son he rejoiced as he looked around the stately halls and noble domain from which the rightful possessor had been driven; for that son he extended economy into penuri-

ousness, and hope into anxiety ; and, too old to expect much more from the world himself, for that son he anticipated, with a wearing and feverish fancy, whatever wealth could purchase, beauty win, or intellect command.

But as if, like the Castle of Otranto, there was something in Mordaunt Court which contained a penalty and a doom for the usurper, no sooner had Vavasour possessed himself of his kinsman's estate, than the prosperity of his life dried and withered away, like Jonah's gourd, in a single night. His son, at the age of thirteen, fell from a scaffold, on which the workmen were making some extensive alterations in the old house, and became a cripple and a valetudinarian for life. But still Vavasour, always of a sanguine temperament, cherished a hope that surgical assistance might restore him : from place to place, from professor to professor, from quack to quack, he carried the unhappy boy, and as each remedy

failed, he was only the more impatient to devise a new one. But as it was the mind as well as person of his son in which the father had stored up his ambition; so, in despite of this fearful accident, and the wretched health by which it was followed, Vavasour never suffered his son to rest from the tasks, and tuitions, and lectures of the various masters by whom he was surrounded. The poor boy, it is true, deprived of physical exertion, and naturally of a serious and applicative disposition, required very little urging to second his father's wishes for his mental improvement; and as the tutors were all of the orthodox university calibre, who imagine that there is no knowledge (but vanity) in any other works than those in which their own education has consisted; so Henry Vavasour became at once the victor and victim of Bentleys and Scaligers, word-weighers and metre-scanners, till, utterly ignorant of every thing which could

have softened his temper, dignified his misfortunes, and reconciled him to his lot; he was sinking fast into the grave, soured by incessant pain into morosity, envy, and bitterness; exhausted by an unwholesome and useless application to unprofitable studies; the best scholar (as it is termed), with the worst regulated and worst informed mind of almost any of his cotemporaries, equal to himself in the advantages of ability, original goodness of disposition, and the costly and profuse expenditure of education.

But the vain father, as he heard, on all sides, of his son's talents, saw nothing sinister in their direction; and though the poor boy grew daily more contracted in mind, and broken in frame, Vavasour yet hugged more and more closely to his breast the hope of ultimate cure for the latter, and future glory for the former. So he went on heaping money, and extending acres, and planting, and improving, and building, and

hoping, and anticipating, for one at whose very feet the grave was already dug, and the shroud laid.

But we left Mr. Brown in the study, making his bow and professions of service to Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt and his son.

" Good day, *honest* Brown," said the former, a middle sized and rather stout man, with a well powdered head, and a sharp, shrewd, and very sallow countenance; " good day — Have you brought any of the foreign *liqueurs* you spoke of, for Mr. Henry ?"

" Yes, Sir, I have some curiously fine *eau d'or* and *liqueurs de îles*, besides the *marasquino* and *curaçoa.* The late Lady Waddilove honoured my taste in these matters with her especial approbation."

" My dear boy," said Vavasour, turning to his son, who lay extended on the couch reading, *not* the Prometheus, (that most noble drama

ever created,) *but the notes upon it*—"my dear boy, as you are fond of *liqueurs*, I desired Brown to get you some peculiarly fine; perhaps—"

"Pish!" said the son, fretfully interrupting him, "do, I beseech you, take your hand off my shoulder. See now, you have made me lose my place. I really do wish you would leave me alone for one moment in the day."

"I beg your pardon, Henry," said the father, looking reverently on the Greek characters, which his son preferred to the newspaper. "It *is* very vexatious, I own; but do taste these *liqueurs*. Dr. Lukewarm said, you might have every thing you liked—"

"But quiet!" muttered the cripple.

"I assure you, Sir," said the wandering merchant, "that they are excellent: allow me, Mr. Vavasour Mordaunt, to ring for a cork-

screw. I really do think, Sir, that Mr. Henry looks much better—I declare he has quite a colour."

"No, indeed!" said Vavasour, eagerly. "Well, it seems to *me*, too, that he is getting better. I intend him to try Mr. E——'s patent collar, in a day or two; but that will in some measure prevent his reading. A great pity; for I am very anxious that he should lose no time in his studies just at present. He goes to Cambridge in October."

"Indeed, Sir. Well, he will set the town in a blaze, I guess, Sir! Every body says what a fine scholar Mr. Henry is—even in the servants' hall!"

"Ay, ay," said Vavasour, gratified, even by this praise, "he is clever enough, Brown; and, what is more, (and here Vavasour's look grew sanctified,) he is good enough. His principles

do equal honour to his head and heart. He would be no son of mine, if he were not as much *the gentleman as the scholar.*"

The youth lifted his heavy and distorted face from his book, and a sneer raised his lip for a moment; but a sudden spasm of pain seizing him, the expression changed, and Vavasour, whose eyes were fixed upon him, hastened to his assistance.

"Throw open the window; Brown, ring the bell—call—"

"Pooh, father," cried the boy, with a sharp, angry voice, "I am not going to die yet, or faint either; but it is all your fault. If you *will* have those odious, vulgar people here for *your own* pleasure, at least suffer me another day to retire."

"My son, my son!" said the grieved father, in reproachful anger, "it was my anxiety to

give you some trifling enjoyment that brought Brown here—you must be sensible of that!"

"You tease me to death," grumbled the peevish unfortunate.

"Well, Sir," said Mr. Brown, "shall I leave the bottles here? or do you please that I should give them to the butler? I see that I am displeasing and troublesome to Mr. Henry; but as my worthy friend and patroness, the late Lady—"

"Go—go—honest Brown!" said Vavasour, (who desired every man's good word)—"go, and give the *liqueurs* to Preston. Mr. Henry is extremely sorry that he is too unwell to see you now; and I—I have the heart of a father for his sufferings."

Mr. Brown withdrew. "'Odious and vulgar,'" said he to himself, in a little fury—for Mr. Brown peculiarly valued himself on his

gentility—" 'odious and vulgar!' To think of his little *lordship* uttering such shameful words! However, I will go into the steward's room, and abuse him there. But, I suppose, I shall get no dinner in this house—no, not so much as a crust of bread; for while the old gentleman is launching out into such prodigious expenses on a great scale—making heathenish temples, and spoiling the fine old house with his new picture gallery and nonsense—he is so close in small matters, that I warrant not a candle-end escapes him—griping, and pinching, and squeezing with one hand, and scattering money, as if it were dirt, with the other—and all for that cross, ugly, deformed, little whipper-snapper of a son. 'Odious and vulgar,' indeed! What shocking language. Mr. Algernon Mordaunt would never have made use of such words, I know. And, bless me, now I think of it, I wonder

where that poor gentleman is—the young heir here is not long for this world, I can see; and who knows but what Mr. Algernon may be in great distress; and, I am sure, as far as four hundred pounds, or even a thousand or two thousand, go, I would not mind lending it him, only upon the post-obits of Squire Vavasour and his hopeful. I like doing a kind thing; and Mr. Algernon was always very good to me; and I am sure I don't care about the security, though I think it will be as sure as sixpence; for the old gentleman must be past sixty, and the young one is the worse life of the two. One should help one another—it is but one's duty: and if he is in great distress he would not mind a handsome premium. Well, nobody can say Morris Brown is not as charitable as the best christian breathing; and, as the late Lady Waddilove very justly observed,

'Brown, believe me, a prudent risk is the surest gain!' I will lose no time in finding the late squire out."

Muttering over these reflections, Mr. Brown took his way to the steward's room.

CHAPTER VII.

> "*Clar.*—How, two letters?"
>
> *The Lover's Progress.*

LETTER FROM CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ., TO THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

"*Hotel* ——, *Calais*.

"MY DEAR DUKE,

"AFTER your kind letter, you will forgive me for not having called upon you before I left England—for you have led me to hope that I may dispense with ceremony towards you; and, in sad and sober earnest, I was in no mood to visit even you during the few days I was in

London, previous to my departure. Some French philosopher has said that, 'the best compliment we can pay our friends, when in sickness or misfortune, is to avoid them.' I will not say how far I disagree with this sentiment: but I know that a French philosopher will be an unanswerable authority with you; and so I will take shelter even under the battery of an enemy.

"I am waiting here for some days, in expectation of Lord Aspeden's arrival. Sick as I was of England, and all that has lately occurred to me there, I was glad to have an opportunity of leaving it sooner than my *chef diplomatique* could do; and I amuse myself very indifferently in this dull town, with reading all the morning, plays all the evening, and dreams of my happier friends all the night.

"And so you are sorry that I did not destroy Lord Borodaile. My dear duke, you would

have been much more sorry if I had! What could you then have done for a living Pasquin for your stray lampoons and vagrant sarcasms? Had an unfortunate bullet carried away

"'That peer of England—pillar of the state,'

as you term him, pray *on* whom could 'Duke Humphrey unfold his griefs?'—Ah, my lord, better as it is, believe me; and, whenever you are at a loss for a subject for wit, you will find cause to bless my forbearance, and congratulate yourself upon the existence of its object.

"Dare I hope that, amidst all the gaieties which court you, you will find time to write to me? If so, you shall have in return the earliest intelligence of every new soprano, and the most elaborate criticisms on every budding figurante of our court.

"Have you met Trollolop, lately—and in what new pursuit are his intellectual energies

engaged? There, you see, I have fairly entrapped your Grace into a question, which common courtesy will oblige you to answer.

"Adieu, ever,

"My dear Duke,

"Most truly, yours," &c.

LETTER FROM THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD TO CLARENCE LINDEN, ESQ.

"A thousand thanks, *mon cher*, for your letter, though it was certainly less amusing and animated, than I could have wished it for your sake, as well as my own; yet it could not have been more welcomely received, had it been as witty as your conversation itself. I heard that you had accepted the place of secretary to Lord Aspeden, and that you had passed through London on your way to the continent, looking

—(the amiable Callythorpe, 'who never flatters,' is my authority)—more like a ghost than yourself. So you may be sure, my dear Linden, that I was very anxious to be convinced, under your own hand, of your carnal existence.

"Take care of yourself, my good fellow, and don't imagine, as I am apt to do, that youth is like my hunter, Fearnought, and will carry you over everything. In return for your philosophical maxim, I will give you another. 'In age, we should remember that we *have been* young, and in youth, that we are *to be* old.'—Ehem!—am I not profound as a moralist? I think a few such sentences would become my long face well; and, to say truth, I am tired of being witty—every one thinks he can be that—so I will borrow Trollolop's philosophy—take snuff, wear a wig out of curl, and grow wise, instead of merry.

"Apropos of Trollolop; let me not forget

that you honour him with your inquiries. I saw him three days since, and he asked me if I had been impressed lately with the idea vulgarly called Clarence Linden; and he then proceeded to inform me that he had heard the atoms which composed your frame were about to be resolved into a new form. While I was knitting my brows very wisely at this intelligence, he passed on to apprise me that I had neither length, breadth, or extension, or any thing but mind. Flattered by so delicate a compliment to my understanding, I yielded my assent; and he then shifted his ground, and told me that there was no such thing as mind—that we were but modifications of matter—and that, in a word, I was all body. I took advantage of this doctrine, and forthwith removed my modification of matter from his.

"Findlater has just lost his younger brother in a duel. You have no idea how shocking

it was. Sir Christopher, one day, heard his brother, who had just entered the —— Dragoons, ridiculed for his want of spirit, by Major Elton, who professed to be the youth's best friend—the honest heart of our worthy baronet was shocked beyond measure at this perfidy, and the next time his brother mentioned Elton's name with praise, out came the story. You may guess the rest: young Findlater called out Elton, who shot him through the lungs!—'I did it for the best,' cried Sir Christopher.

"*La pauvre petite Meronville!*—What an Ariadne! Just as I was thinking to play the Bacchus to your Theseus, up steps an old gentleman from Yorkshire, who hears it is fashionable to marry *les bonas robas*, proposes honourable matrimony, and deprives me and the world of La Meronville! The wedding took place on Monday last, and the happy pair

set out to their seat in the North. Verily, we shall have quite a new race in the next generation—I expect all the babes will skip into the world with a *pas de zéphir*, singing in sweet trebles—

> " 'Little dancing loves we are—
> Who the deuce is our papa ?'

" I think you will be surprised to hear that Lord Borodaile is beginning to thaw—I saw him smile the other day! Certainly, we are not so near the North Pole as we were! He is going, and so am I, in the course of the autumn, to your old friends, the Westboroughs. Report says that he is *un peu épris de la belle Flore*; but, then, Report is such a liar!—For my own part, I always contradict her.

" Tell me how Lord Aspeden's flatteries are received in Italy. Somewhat like snow in that country, I should imagine—more surprising than

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWA

agreeable! I eagerly embrace your offer of correspondence, and assure you that there are few people by whose friendship I conceive myself so much honoured as by yours. You will believe this; for you know that, like Callythorpe, I never flatter.—Farewell for the present.

"Sincerely yours,

"HAVERFIELD."

CHAPTER VIII.

"*Q. Eliz.*—Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?
K. Rich.—Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.
Q. Eliz.—Shall I forget myself to be myself?"

SHAKSPEARE.

IT wanted one hour to midnight, as Crauford walked slowly to the lonely and humble street where he had appointed his meeting with Glendower. It was a stormy and fearful night. The day had been uncommonly sultry, and as it died away, thick masses of cloud came labouring along the air, which lay heavy and breathless, as if under a spell—as if in those dense and haggard vapours the rider of the storm sat, like an

incubus, upon the atmosphere beneath, and paralysed the motion and wholesomeness of the sleeping winds. And about the hour of twilight, or rather when twilight should have been, instead of its quiet star, from one obscure corner of the heavens flashed a solitary gleam of lightning, lingered a moment,

> "And ere a man had power to say, Behold!
> The jaws of darkness did devour it up."

But then, as if awakened from a torpor by a signal universally acknowledged, from the courts and quarters of heaven, came, blaze after blaze, and peal upon peal, the light and voices of the Elements when they walk abroad. The rain fell not: all was dry and arid. The mood of Nature seemed not gentle enough for tears, and the lightning, livid and forked, flashed from the sullen and motionless clouds with a deadly fierceness, made trebly perilous by the panting drought and stagnation of the air. The streets were

empty and silent, as if the huge city had been doomed and delivered to the wrath of the tempest—and ever and anon the lightnings paused upon the housetops, shook and quivered as if meditating their stroke, and then, baffled, as it were, by some superior and guardian agency, vanished into their gloomy tents, and made their next descent from some opposite corner of the skies.

It was a remarkable instance of the force with which a cherished object occupies the thoughts, and of the all-sufficiency of the human mind to itself, the slowness and unconsciousness of danger with which Crauford, a man luxurious as well as naturally timid, moved amidst the angry fires of heaven, and brooded, undisturbed, and sullenly serene, over the project at his heart.

"A rare night for our meeting," thought he, "I suppose he will not fail me. Now let me con over my task. I must not tell him all yet. Such

babes must be led into error before they can walk—just a little inkling will suffice—a glimpse into the arcana of my scheme. Well, it is indeed fortunate that I met him, for verily I am surrounded with danger, and a very little delay in the assistance I am forced to seek, might exalt me to a higher elevation than the peerage."

Such was the meditation of this man, as, with a slow, shuffling walk, characteristic of his mind, he proceeded to the appointed spot.

A cessation of unusual length in the series of the lightnings, and the consequent darkness, against which the dull and scanty lamps vainly struggled, prevented Crauford and another figure, approaching from the opposite quarter, seeing each other till they almost touched.—Crauford stopped abruptly.

"Is it you?" said he.

"It is a man who has outlived fortune!" answered Glendower, in the exaggerated and

metaphorical language which the thoughts of men who imagine warmly, and are excited powerfully, so often assume.

"Then," rejoined Crauford, "you are the more suited for my purpose. A little urging of necessity behind, is a marvellous whetter of the appetite to danger before.—He! he!" And as he said this, his low, chuckling laugh jarringly enough contrasted with the character of the night and his companion.

Glendower replied not: a pause ensued; and the lightning, which, spreading on a sudden from east to west, hung over the city a burning and ghastly canopy, shewed the face of each to the other, working, and almost haggard, as it was, with the conception of dark thoughts, and rendered wan and unearthly by the spectral light in which it was beheld.—"It is an awful night!" said Glendower.

"True," answered Crauford—"a very awful

night; but we are all safe under the care of Providence. — Jesus! what a flash! — Think you it is a favourable opportunity for our conversation?"

"Why not?" said Glendower; "what have the thunders and wrath of Heaven to do with us?"

"H—e—m! h—e—m! God sees all things," rejoined Crauford, "and avenges himself on the guilty by his storms!"

"Ay; but those are the storms of the heart! I tell you that even the innocent may have that within, to which the loudest tempests without are peace! But guilt, you say—what have *we* to do with guilt?"

Crauford hesitated, and, avoiding any reply to this question, drew Glendower's arm within his own, and, in a low half-whispered tone said—

"Glendower, survey mankind; look with a

passionless and unprejudiced eye upon the scene which moves around us: what do you see any where but the same re-acted and eternal law of nature—all, all preying upon each other? Or if there be a solitary individual who refrains, he is as a man without a common badge, without a marriage garment, and the rest trample him under foot! Glendower, *you* are such a man! Now hearken, I will deceive you not; I honour you too much to beguile you, even to your own good. I own to you, fairly and at once, that in the scheme I shall unfold to you there may be something repugnant to the factitious and theoretical principles of education—something hostile to the prejudices, though not to the reasonings, of the mind; but—"

"Hold!" said Glendower abruptly, pausing and fixing his bold and searching eye upon the tempter; "hold!—there will be no need of argument or refinement in this case: tell me at

once your scheme, and at once I will accept or reject it!"

"Gently," answered Crauford: "to all deeds of contract there is a preamble. Listen to me yet farther: when I have ceased, I will listen to you. It is in vain that you place man in cities—it is in vain that you fetter him with laws—it is in vain that you pour into his mind the light of an imperfect morality, of a glimmering wisdom, of an ineffectual religion: in all places he is the same—the same savage and crafty being, who makes the passions which rule himself the tools of his conquest over others! There is in all creation but one evident law—self-preservation! Split it as you like into hairbreadths and atoms, it is still fundamentally and essentially unaltered. Glendower, that self-preservation is our bond now. Of myself I do not at present speak—I refer only to you: self-preservation commands you to place im-

plicit confidence in me; it impels you to abjure indigence, by accepting the proposal I am about to make to you."

"You, as yet, speak enigmas," said Glendower; "but they are sufficiently clear to tell me, their sense is not such as I have heard you utter."

"You are right. Truth is not always safe—safe either to others, or to ourselves! But I bare open to you now my real heart: look in it—I dare to say that you will behold charity, benevolence, piety to God, love and friendship at this moment to yourself; but I own, also, that you will behold there a determination—which, to me, seems courage—not to be the only idle being in the world, where all are busy; or, worse still, to be the only one engaged in a perilous and uncertain game, and yet shunning to employ all the arts of which he is master. I will own to you that, long since, had I been

foolishly inert, I should have been, at this moment, more pennyless and destitute than yourself. I live happy, respected, wealthy! I enjoy in their widest range the blessings of life. I dispense those blessings to others. Look round the world—whose name stands fairer than mine? whose hand relieves more of human distresses? whose tongue preaches purer doctrines? None, Glendower, none. I offer to you means not dissimilar to those I have chosen—fortunes not unequal to those I possess. Nothing but the most unjustifiable fastidiousness will make you hesitate to accept my offer."

"You cannot expect that I have met you this night with a resolution to be unjustifiably fastidious," said Glendower, with a hollow and cold smile.

Crauford did not immediately answer, for he was considering whether it was yet the time for

disclosing the important secret. While he was deliberating, the sullen clouds began to break from their suspense. A double darkness gathered around, and a few large drops fell on the ground in token of a more general discharge about to follow from the floodgates of heaven. The two men moved onward, and took shelter under an old arch.

Crauford first broke silence. "Hist," said he—"hist—do you hear any thing?"

"Yes! I heard the winds and the rain, and the shaking houses, and the plashing pavements, and the reeking housetops—nothing more."

Looking long and anxiously around to certify himself that none was indeed the witness of their conference, Crauford approached close to Glendower, and laid his hand heavily upon his arm. At that moment a vivid and lengthened flash of lightning shot through the ruined arch, and gave to Crauford's conntenance a lustre

which Glendower almost started to behold. That face, usually so smooth, calm, bright in complexion, and almost inexpressive from its extreme composure, now agitated by the excitement of the moment, and tinged by the ghastly light of the skies, became literally fearful. The cold blue eye glared out from its socket—the lips blanched, and parting in act to speak, shewed the white glistening teeth; and the corners of the mouth, drawn down in a half sneer, gave to the cheeks, rendered green and livid by the lightning, a lean and hollow appearance, contrary to their natural shape.

"It is," said Crauford, in a whispered but distinct tone, "a perilous secret that I am about to disclose to you. I indeed have no concern in it, but my lords the judges have, and you will not therefore be surprised if I forestall the ceremonies of their court, and require an oath."

Then, his manner and voice suddenly changing

into an earnest and deep solemnity, as excitation gave him an eloquence more impressive, because unnatural to his ordinary moments, he continued. "By these lightnings and commotions above—by the heavens in which they revel in their terrible sports—by the earth, whose towers they crumble, and herbs they blight, and creatures they blast into cinders at their will—by Him whom, whatever be the name he bears, all men in the living world worship and tremble before—by whatever is sacred in this great and mysterious universe, and at the peril of whatever can wither, and destroy, and curse—swear to preserve inviolable and for ever the secret I shall whisper to your ear!"

The profound darkness which now, in the pauses of the lightning, wrapt the scene, hid from Crauford all sight of the effect he had produced, and even the very outline of Glendower's figure; but the gloom made more distinct the

voice which thrilled through it upon Crauford's ear.

"Promise me that there is not dishonour, nor crime, which is dishonour, in this confidence, and I swear."

Crauford ground his teeth. He was about to reply impetuously, but he checked himself. "I am not going," thought he, "to communicate my own share of this plot, but merely to state that a plot does exist, and then to point out in what manner he can profit by it—so far, therefore, there is no guilt in his concealment, and consequently no excuse for him to break his vow."

Rapidly running over this self-argument, he said aloud—"I promise!"

"And," rejoined Glendower, "I swear!"

At the close of this sentence another flash of lightning again made darkness visible, and Glendower, beholding the countenance of his companion, again recoiled; for its mingled haggard-

ness and triumph seemed to his excited imagination the very expression of a fiend !—" Now," said Crauford, relapsing into his usual careless tone, somewhat enlivened by his sneer, " now, then, you must not interrupt me in my disclosure, by those starts and exclamations which break from your philosophy like sparks from flint. Hear me throughout."

And bending down, till his mouth reached Glendower's ear, he commenced his recital. Artfully hiding his own agency, the master-spring of the gigantic machinery of fraud which, too mighty for a single hand, required an assistant—throwing into obscurity the sin, while knowing the undaunted courage and desperate fortunes of the man, he did not affect to conceal the danger—expatiating upon the advantages, the immense and almost inexhaustible resources of wealth which his scheme suddenly opened upon one in the deepest abyss of poverty, and slightly

sketching, as if to excite vanity, the ingenuity and genius by which the scheme originated, and could only be sustained—Crauford's detail of temptation, in its knowledge of human nature, in its adaptation of act to principles, in its web-like craft of self-concealment, and the speciousness of its lure, was indeed a splendid masterpiece of villainous invention.

But while Glendower listened, and his silence flattered Crauford's belief of victory, not for one single moment did a weak or yielding desire creep around his heart. Subtly as the scheme was varnished, and scarce a tithe of its comprehensive enormity unfolded, the strong and acute mind of one, long accustomed to unravel sophistry, and gaze on the loveliness of truth, saw at once, that the scheme proposed was of the most unmingled treachery and baseness. Sick, chilled, withering at heart, Glendower leant against the damp wall, as every word, which the tempter

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

fondly imagined was irresistibly confirming his purpose, tore away the last prop to which, in the credulity of hope, the student had clung, and mocked while it crushed the fondness of his belief.

Crauford ceased, and stretched forth his hand to grasp Glendower's. He felt it not.—"You do not speak, my friend," said he; "do you deliberate, or have you not decided?" Still, no answer came. Surprised, and half alarmed, he turned round, and perceived by a momentary flash of lightning, that Glendower had risen, and was moving away towards the mouth of the arch.

"Good Heavens! Glendower," cried Crauford, "where are you going?"

"Any where," cried Glendower, in a sudden paroxysm of indignant passion, "any where in this great globe of suffering, so that the agonies of my human flesh and heart are not polluted by the accents of crime! And such crime!—Why I would rather go forth into the highways,

and win bread by the sharp knife, and the death struggle, than sink my soul in such mire and filthiness of sin. Fraud—fraud—treachery! Merciful Father! what can be my state, when these are supposed to tempt me!"

Astonished and aghast, Crauford remained rooted to the spot.

"Oh!" continued Glendower—and his noble nature was wrung to the utmost; 'Oh, man—man; that I should have devoted my best and freshest years to the dream of serving thee. In my boyish enthusiasm, in my brief day of pleasure and of power, in the intoxication of love, in the reverses of fortune, in the squalid and obscure chambers of degradation and poverty, that one hope animated, cheered, sustained me through all. In temptation, did this hand belie, or in sickness did this brain forego, or in misery did this heart forget thy great and advancing cause? In the wide world, is there one being whom I have injured, even in

thought—one being who, in the fellowship of want, should not have drank of my cup, or broken with me the last morsel of my bread!—and now—now, is it come to this!"

And hiding his face with his hands, he gave way to a violence of feeling, before which the weaker nature of Crauford stood trembling and abashed. It lasted not long; he raised his head from its drooping posture, and, as he stood at the entrance of the arch, a prolonged flash from the inconstant skies shone full upon his form. Tall, erect, still, the gloomy and ruined walls gave his colourless countenance and haughty stature in bold and distinct relief; all trace of the past passion had vanished: perfectly calm and set, his features borrowed even dignity from their marble paleness, and the marks of suffering, which the last few months had writ in legible characters on the cheek and brow. Seeking out, with an eye to which the intolerable lightnings

seemed to have lent something of their fire, the cowering and bended form of his companion, he said—

"Go home, miserable derider of the virtue you cannot understand—go to your luxurious and costly home—go and repine that human nature is not measured by your mangled and crippled laws—that the fall and the stain of a human soul is not upon your hands. Amidst these living fires of heaven—amidst the witness of the sweeping and roaring elements, do you not tremble to the centre of your petty being, when you remember your guilt? Reptile that you are, do you not tremble to creep forth upon your loathsome and venomous path, to add to the stings of fortune—to the poison of a full and bitter cup, by a sting and a poison deadlier than all! Go—if not to your home—elsewhere, upon your unholy errand; dive into prisons and hovels, and roofless sheds; profit by the deliri-

ous impulse of famishing want, and the spur of a craving and imperious nature—among rags and destitution, and men made mad by hunger, you may find a fit instrument for a fraud so monstrous and black. I leave you to that hope, and to—remembrance!"

As Glendower moved away, Crauford recovered himself. Rendered desperate by the vital necessity of procuring some speedy aid in his designs, and not yet perfectly persuaded of the fallacy of his former judgment, he was resolved not to suffer Glendower thus easily to depart. Smothering his feelings by an effort violent even to his habitual hypocrisy, he sprung forward, and laid his hand upon Glendower's shoulder.

"Stay, stay," said he in a soothing and soft voice, "you have wronged me greatly. I pardon your warmth — nay, I honour it; but hereafter you will repent your judgment of me. At least, do justice to my intentions. Was I an

actor in the scheme proposed to you?—what was it to me? Was I in the smallest degree to be benefited by it? Could I have had any other motive than affection for you? If I erred, it was from a different view of the question; but is it not the duty of a friend to find expedients for distress, and to leave to the distressed person the right of accepting or rejecting them? But let this drop for ever—partake of my fortune--be my adopted brother. Here, I have hundreds about me at this moment; take them all, and own at least that I meant you well."

Feeling that Glendower, who at first had vainly endeavoured to shake off his hand, now turned towards him; though at the moment it was too dark to see his countenance, the wily speaker continued.—"Yes, Glendower, if by that name I must alone address you, take half, take all I have—there is no one in this world

dearer to me than you are. I am a lonely and disappointed man, without children or ties. I sought out a friend who might be my brother in life, and my heir in death. I found you—be that to me!"

"I am faint and weak," said Glendower, slowly, "and I believe my senses cannot be clear; but a minute since, and you spoke at length, and with a terrible distinctness, words which it polluted my very ear to catch, and *now* you speak as if you loved me. Will it please you to solve the riddle."

"The truth is this," said Crauford: "I knew your pride—I feared you would not accept a permanent pecuniary aid, even from friendship. I was driven, therefore, to devise some plan of independence for you: I could think of no plan but that which I proposed. You speak of it as wicked: it may be so; but it seemed not wicked to me. I may have

formed a wrong—I own it is a peculiar principle of morals; but it is, at least, sincere. Judging of my proposal by that principle, I saw no sin in it. I saw, too, much less danger than, in the honesty of my heart, I spoke of. In a similar distress, I solemnly swear, I myself would have adopted a similar relief. Nor is this all; the plan proposed would have placed thousands in your power. Forgive me if I thought your life, and the lives of those most dear to you, of greater value than these sums to the persons defrauded—ay—defrauded, if you will: forgive me if I thought, that with these thousands you would effect far more good to the community than their legitimate owners. Upon these grounds, and on some others, too tedious now to state, I justified my proposal to my conscience. Pardon me, I again beseech you: accept my last proposal; be my partner, my friend, my heir; and forget a scheme never

proposed to you, if I had hoped (what I hope now) that you would accept the alternative which it is my pride to offer, and which you are not justified, even by pride, to refuse."

"Great Source of all knowledge!" ejaculated Glendower, scarce audibly, and to himself. "Supreme and unfathomable God!—dost thou most loathe or pity thine abased creatures, walking in their dim reason upon this little earth, and sanctioning fraud, treachery, crime, upon a principle borrowed from thy laws! Oh! when—when will thy full light of wisdom travel down to us, and guilt and sorrow, and this world's evil mysteries, roll away like vapours before the blaze!"

"I do not hear you, my friend," said Crauford. "Speak aloud; you will—I feel you will, accept my offer, and become my brother!"

"Away!" said Glendower. "I will not."

"He wanders—his brain is touched!" mut-

tered Crauford, and then resumed aloud—"Glendower, we are both unfit for talk at present—both unstrung by our late jar. You will meet me again to-morrow, perhaps. I will accompany you now to your door."

"Not a step: our paths are different."

"Well, well, if you will have it so, be it as you please. I have offended; you have a right to punish me, and play the churl to-night, but your address?"

"Yonder," said Glendower, pointing to the heavens. "Come to me a month hence, and you will find me there!"

"Nay, nay, my friend, your brain is heated, but you leave me! Well, as I said, your will is mine—at least take some of these paltry notes in earnest of our bargain; remember when next we meet, you will share all I have."

"You remind me," said Glendower, quietly, "that we have old debts to settle. When last

I saw you, you lent me a certain sum—there it is—take it—count it—there is but one poor guinea gone. Fear not,—even to the uttermost farthing you shall be repaid."

"Why, why, this is unkind, ungenerous. Stay, stay—" but waving his hand impatiently, Glendower darted away, and passing into another street, the darkness effectually closed upon his steps.

"Fool, fool that I am," cried Crauford, stamping vehemently on the ground—"in what point did my wit fail me, that I could not win one whom very hunger had driven into my net! But I must yet find him—and I will—the police shall be set to work: these half confidences may ruin me. And how deceitful he has proved—to talk more diffidently than a whining harlot upon virtue, and yet be so stubborn upon trial! Dastard that I am too, as well as fool—I felt sunk into the dust by his voice. But pooh, I must

have him yet; your worst villains make the most noise about the first step. True, that I cannot storm, but I will undermine. But, wretch that I am, I must win him, or another soon, or I perish on a gibbet—Out, base thought!"

CHAPTER IX.

"Formam quidem ipsam, Marce fili, et tanquam faciem honesti vides: quæ, si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores (ut ait Plato) excitaret sapientiæ."

Tull.

It was almost dawn when Glendower returned to his home. Fearful of disturbing his wife, he stole with mute steps to the damp and rugged chamber, where the last son of a princely line, and the legitimate owner of lands and halls which ducal rank might have envied, held his miserable asylum. The first faint streaks of coming light broke through the shutterless and shattered windows, and he saw that *she* reclined in a deep

sleep upon the chair beside their child's couch. She would not go to bed herself till Glendower returned, and she had sat up, watching and praying, and listening for his footsteps, till in the utter exhaustion of debility and sickness, sleep had fallen upon her. Glendower bent over her.

"Sleep!" said he, "sleep on! The wicked do not come to thee now. Thou art in a world that has no fellowship with this—a world from which even happiness is not banished! Nor woe, nor pain, nor memory of the past, nor despair of all before thee make the characters of thy present state! Thou forestallest the forgetfulness of the grave, and thy heart concentrates all earth's comfort in one word—'Oblivion.' Beautiful, *how* beautiful thou art even yet! — that smile, that momentary blush, years have not conquered *them*. They are as when, my young bride, thou didst lean first upon my bosom, and dream that

sorrow was no more! And I have brought thee unto this. These green walls make thy bridal chamber—yon fragments of bread thy bridal board. Well! it is no matter! thou art on thy way to a land where all things, even a breaking heart, are at rest. I weep not; wherefore should I weep! Tears are not for the dead, but their survivors. I would rather see thee drop inch by inch into the grave, and smile as I beheld it, than save thee for an inheritance of sin. What is there in this little and sordid life, that we should strive to hold it? What in this dreadful dream, that we should fear to wake?"

And Glendower knelt beside his wife, and, despite his words, tears flowed fast and gushingly down his cheeks; and wearied as he was, he watched upon her slumbers, till they fell from the eyes to which his presence was more joyous than the day.

It was a beautiful thing, even in sorrow, to

see that couple, whom want could not debase, nor misfortune, which makes even generosity selfish, divorce! All that Fate had stripped from the poetry and graces of life, had not shaken one leaf from the romance of their green and unwithered affections! They were the very type of love in its holiest and most enduring shape: their hearts had grown together—their being had flowed through caves and deserts, and reflected the storms of an angry Heaven; but its waters had indissolubly mingled into one! Young, gifted, noble, and devoted, they were worthy victims of this blighting and bitter world! Their garden was turned into a wilderness; but, like our first parents, it was hand in hand that they took their solitary way! Evil beset them, but they swerved not; the rains and the winds fell upon their unsheltered heads, but they were not bowed; and, through the mazes and briars

of this weary life, their bleeding footsteps strayed not, *for they had a clue!* The mind seemed, as it were, to become visible and *external* as the frame decayed, and to cover the body with something of its own invulnerable power; so that whatever should have attacked the mortal and frail part, fell upon that which, imperishable and divine, resisted and subdued it!

It was unfortunate for Glendower that he never again met Wolfe; for neither fanaticism of political faith, nor sternness of natural temper, ever subdued in the republican the real benevolence and generosity which redeemed and elevated his character: nor could any impulse of party zeal have induced him, like Crauford, systematically to take advantage of poverty in order to tempt to participation in his schemes. —From a more evil companion Glendower had not yet escaped: Crauford, by some means or other, found out his abode, and lost no time in

availing himself of the discovery. In order fully to comprehend his unwearied persecution of Glendower, it must constantly be remembered, that to this persecution he was bound by a necessity which, urgent, dark, and implicating life itself, rendered him callous to every obstacle, and unsusceptible of all remorse. With the exquisite tact which he possessed, he never openly recurred to his former proposal of fraud: he contented himself with endeavouring to persuade Glendower to accept pecuniary assistance; but in vain. The veil once torn from his character, no craft could restore. Through all his pretences, and seven-fold hypocrisy, Glendower penetrated at once into his real motives: he was not to be duped by assurances of friendship which he knew the very dissimilarities between their natures rendered impossible. He had seen at the first, despite of all allegations to the contrary, that, in the fraud

Crauford had proposed, that person could by no means be an uninfluenced and cold adviser. In after conversations, Crauford, driven, by the awful interest he had in success, from his usual consummateness of duplicity, betrayed in various important minutiæ how deeply he was implicated in the crime for which he had argued; and not even the visible and progressive decay of his wife and child could force the stern mind of Glendower into accepting the wages of that iniquity which he knew well were only offered as an earnest or a snare.

There is a majesty about extreme misery, when the mind falls not with the fortunes, which no hardihood of vice can violate unabashed. Often and often, humbled and defeated, through all his dissimulation, was Crauford driven from the presence of the man whom it was his bitterest punishment to fear most when most he affected to despise; and *as*

often, recollecting his powers, and fortifying himself in his experience of human frailty when sufficiently tried, did he return to his attempts. He waylaid the door and watched the paths of his intended prey. He knew that the mind which even best repels temptation first urged, hath seldom power to resist the same suggestion, if daily, dropping, unwearying, presenting itself in every form, obtruded in every hour, losing its horror by custom, and finding in the rebellious bosom itself its smoothest vizard and most alluring excuse. And it was, indeed, a mighty and perilous trial to Glendower, when rushing from the presence of his wife and child—when fainting under accumulated evils—when almost delirious with sickening and heated thought, to hear at each prompting of the wrung and excited nature, each heave of the black fountain that in no mortal breast is utterly exhausted, one smooth, soft, persuasive

voice for ever whispering, "Relief!"—relief, certain, utter, instantaneous!—the voice of one pledged never to relax an effort or spare a pang, by a danger to himself, a danger of shame and death—the voice of one who never spake but in friendship and compassion, profound in craft, and a very sage in the disguises with which language invests deeds.

But VIRTUE has resources buried in itself, which we know not, till the invading hour calls them from their retreats. Surrounded by hosts without, and when nature itself turned traitor, is its most deadly enemy within; it assumes a new and a super-human power, which is greater than nature itself. Whatever be its creed—whatever be its sect—from whatever segment of the globe its orisons arise, Virtue is God's empire, and from his throne of thrones He will defend it. The orbs of creation; the islands of light which float in myriads on the ocean of the universe; suns that have no number, pouring life upon worlds

that, untravelled by the wings of seraphim, spread through the depths of space without end; these are to the eye of God but the creatures of a lesser exertion of His power, born to blaze, to testify His glory, and to perish! But Virtue is more precious than all worlds—an emanation, an essence of Himself—more ethereal than the angels—more durable than the palaces—of Heaven!—the mightiest masterpiece of Him who set the stars upon their courses, and filled Chaos with an universe! Though cast into this distant earth, and struggling on the dim arena of a human heart, all things above are spectators of its conflict, or enlisted in its cause. The angels have their charge over it — the banners of arch-angels are on its side; and from sphere to sphere, through the illimitable ether, and round the impenetrable darkness, at the feet of God, its triumph is hymned by harps, which are strung to the glories of its Creator!

One evening, when Crauford had joined Glendower in his solitary wanderings, the dissembler renewed his attacks.

"But why not," said he, "accept from my friendship what to my benevolence you would deny? I couple with my offers, my prayers rather, no conditions. How then *do* you, *can* you, reconcile it to your conscience, to suffer your wife and child to perish before your eyes?"

"Man—man," said Glendower, "tempt me no more—let them die! At present, the worst is death—what you offer me is dishonour."

"Heavens!—how uncharitable is this! Can you call the mere act of accepting money from one who loves you, dishonour?"

"It is in vain that you varnish your designs," said Glendower, stopping, and fixing his eyes upon him. "Do you not think that cunning ever betrays itself? In a thousand words—in a thousand looks, which have escaped *you*, but not

me, I know that, if there be one being on this earth whom you hate, and would injure, that being is myself. Nay, start not—listen to me patiently. I have sworn that it is the last opportunity you shall have. I will not subject myself to farther temptation: I am now sane; but there are things which may drive me mad, and in madness you might conquer. You hate me: it is out of the nature of earthly things that you should not. But even were it otherwise, do you think that I could believe you would come from your voluptuous home to these miserable retreats; that, among the lairs of beggary and theft, you would lie in wait to allure me to forsake poverty, without a stronger motive than love for one who affects it not for you? I know you—I have read your heart—I have penetrated into that stronger motive—it is your own safety. In the system of atrocity you proposed to me, you are the principal. You have already bared

to me enough of the extent to which that system reaches, to convince me that one miscreant, however ingenious, cannot, unassisted, support it with impunity. You want help: I am he in whom you have dared believe that you could find it. You are detected—now be undeceived."

"Is it so?" said Crauford; and as he saw that it was no longer possible to feign, the poison of his heart broke forth in its full venom. The fiend rose from the reptile, and stood exposed in its natural shape. Returning Glendower's stern but lofty gaze with an eye to which all evil passions lent their unholy fire, he repeated, "Is it so?—then you are more penetrating than I thought; but it is indifferent to me. It was for your sake, not mine, most righteous man, that I wished you might have a disguise to satisfy the modesty of your punctilios. It is all one to Richard Crauford whether you go blindfold or with open eyes into his snare. Go you must, and

shall. Ay, frowns will not awe me. You have desired the truth; you shall have it. You are right, I hate you—hate you with a soul whose force of hatred you cannot dream of. Your pride, your stubbornness, your coldness of heart, which things that would stir the blood of beggars, cannot warm— your icy and passionless virtue—I hate—I hate all! You are right also, most wise inquisitor, in supposing that in the scheme proposed to you, I am the principal—I am! You were to be the tool, and *shall.* I have offered you mild inducements—pleas to soothe the technicalities of your conscience—you have rejected them—be it so. Now, choose between my first offer and the gibbet. Ay, the gibbet! That night on which we made the appointment, which shall not yet be in vain—on that night you stopped me in the street—you demanded money—you robbed me—I will swear—I will prove it. Now, then, tremble, man of morality

—dupe of your own strength—you are in my power—tremble! Yet in *my* safety is your escape—I am generous. I repeat my original offer—wealth, as great as you will demand, or—the gibbet—the gibbet—do I speak loud enough?—do you hear?"

"Poor fool!" said Glendower, laughing scornfully, and moving away. But when Crauford, partly in mockery, partly in menace, placed his hand upon Glendower's shoulder, as if to stop him, the touch seemed to change his mood from scorn to fury—turning abruptly round, he seized the villain's throat with a giant's strength, and cried out, while his whole countenance worked beneath the tempestuous wrath within, "What if I squeeze out thy poisonous life from thee this moment!"—and then once more bursting into a withering laughter, as he surveyed the terror which he had excited, he added, "No; no,

thou art too vile!"—and, dashing the hypocrite against the wall of a neighbouring house, he strode away.

Recovering himself slowly, and trembling with rage and fear, Crauford gazed round, expecting yet to find he had sported too far with the passions he had sought to controul. When, however, he had fully satisfied himself that Glendower was gone, all his wrathful and angry feelings returned with redoubled force. But their most biting torture was the consciousness of their impotence. For after the first paroxysm of rage had subsided, he saw, too clearly, that his threat could not be executed without incurring the most imminent danger of discovery. High as his character stood, it was possible that no charge against him might excite suspicion; but a word might cause inquiry—and inquiry would be ruin. Forced, therefore, to stomach his

failure, his indignation, his shame, his hatred, and his vengeance, his own heart became a punishment almost adequate to his vices.

"But my foe will die," said he, clenching his fist so firmly that the nails almost brought blood from the palm: "he will starve, famish; and see them—his wife, his child—perish first! I shall have my triumph, though I shall not witness it!—But now, away to my villa: there, at least, will be some one whom I can mock, and beat, and trample, if I will! *Would—would—would that I were that very man, destitute as he is!* His neck, at least, is safe: if he dies, it will not be upon the gallows, nor among the hootings of the mob! O, horror! horror! What is my villa, my wine, my women, with that black thought, ever following me like a shadow?—Who—who, while an avalanche is sailing over him, who would sit down to feast?"

Leaving this man to shun or be overtaken by Fate, we return to Glendower. It is needless to say that Crauford visited him no more; and, indeed, shortly afterwards Glendower again changed his home. But every day and every hour brought new strength to the disease which was creeping and burning through the veins of the devoted wife; and Glendower, who saw, on earth, nothing before them but a gaol, from which, as yet, they had been miraculously delivered, repined not as he beheld her approach to a gentler and benigner home. Often he sate, as she was bending over their child, and gazed upon her cheek with an insane and fearful joy at the characters which consumption had there engraved; but when she turned towards him her fond eyes, (those deep wells of love, in which truth lay hid, and which neither languor nor disease could exhaust,) the unnatural hardness of his heart melted away, and he would

rush from the house, to give vent to an agony against which fortitude and manhood were in vain!

There was no hope for their distress. His wife had, unknown to Glendower, (for she dreaded his pride), written several times to a relation, who, though distant, was still the nearest in blood which fate had spared her, but ineffectually: the scions of a large and illegitimate family, which surrounded him, utterly prevented the success, and generally interrupted the application of any claimant on his riches but themselves. Glendower, whose temper had ever kept him aloof from all but the commonest acquaintances, knew no human being to apply to. Deprived by birth of the coarser refuges of poverty, and utterly unable to avail himself of the mine which his knowledge and talents should have proved—sick, and despondent at heart, and debarred by the loftiness of honour, or rather

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS

principle that nothing could quell, from any unlawful means of earning bread, which to most minds would have been rendered excusable by the urgency of nature, Glendower marked the days drag on in dull and protracted despair, and envied every corpse that he saw borne to the asylum in which all earth's hopes seemed centred and confined!

CHAPTER X.

> "For ours was not like earthly love.
> And must this parting be our very last?
> No! I shall love thee still when death itself is past.
> *　　*　　*　　*　　*
> *　　*　　*　　*　　*
> Hush'd were his Gertrude's lips! but still their bland
> And beautiful expression seem'd to melt
> With love that could not die! and still his hand
> She presses to the heart, no more that felt.
> Ah, heart! where once each fond affection dwelt."
>
> CAMPBELL.

"I WONDER," said Mr. Brown to himself, as he spurred his shaggy pony to a speed very unusual to the steady habits of either party—"I wonder where I shall find him. I would not for the late Lady Waddilove's best diamond

cross, have any body forestall me in the news. To think of my young master dying so soon after my last visit, or rather my last visit but one—and to think of the old gentleman taking on so, and raving about his injustice to the rightful possessor, and saying that he is justly punished, and asking me so eagerly if I could discover the retreat of the late squire, and believing me so implicitly when I undertook to do it, and giving me this letter!" And here Mr. Brown wistfully examined an epistle sealed with black wax, peeping into the corners, which irritated, rather than satisfied his curiosity—"I wonder what the old gentleman says in it—I suppose he will, of course, give up the estate and house. Let me see—that long picture gallery, just built, will, at all events, want furnishing. That would be a famous opportunity to get rid of the Indian jars, and the sofas, and the great Turkey carpet. How lucky,

that I should just have come in time to get the letter. But let me consider—how I shall find out?—an advertisement in the paper? Ah! that's the plan. 'Algernon Mordaunt, Esq.:—something greatly to his advantage—apply to Mr. Brown, &c.' Ah! that will do well, very well. The Turkey carpet won't be quite long enough. I wish I had discovered Mr. Mordaunt's address before, and lent him some money during the young gentleman's life; it would have seemed more generous. However, I can offer it now, before I shew the letter. Bless me, it's getting dark. Come, Dobbin, ye-hup." Such were the lucubrations of the faithful friend of the late Lady Waddilove, as he hastened to London, charged with the task of discovering Mordaunt, and with the delivery of the following epistle:—

"You are now, Sir, the heir to that property

which, some years ago, passed from your hands into mine. My son, for whom alone wealth, or, I may say, life, was valuable to me, is no more. I only, an old, childless, man, stand between you and the estates of Mordaunt. Do not wait for my death to enjoy them. I cannot live here, where every thing reminds me of my great and irreparable loss. I shall remove next month into another home. Consider this, then, as once more yours. The house, I believe, you will find not disimproved by my alterations; the mortgages on the estate have been paid off; the former rental you will perhaps allow my steward to account to *you* for, and after my death the present one will be yours. I am informed that you are a proud man, and not likely to receive favours. Be it so, Sir!—it is not as a favour on your side that I now make you this request—there are circumstances connected with my treaty with your father, which

have of late vexed my conscience—and conscience, Sir, must be satisfied at any loss. But we shall meet, perhaps, and talk over the past; at present I will not enlarge on it. If you have suffered by me, I am sufficiently punished, and my only hope is, to repair your losses.

"I am, &c.,

"H. Vavasour Mordaunt."

Such was the letter, so important to Mordaunt, with which our worthy friend was charged. Bowed to the dust, as Vavasour was, by the loss of his son, and open to conscience, as affliction had made him, he had lived too long for effect, not to be susceptible to its influence, even to the last. Amidst all his grief, and it was intense, there were some whispers of self-exaltation at the thought of the *éclat*, which his generosity and abdication would excite; and, with true worldly morality, the hoped-for plau-

dits of others gave a triumph, rather than humiliation, to his reconcilement with himself.

To say truth, there were indeed circumstances connected with his treaty with Mordaunt's father, calculated to vex his conscience. He knew that he had not only taken great advantage of Mr. Mordaunt's distress, but that, at his instigation, a paper, which could for ever have prevented Mr. Mordaunt's sale of the property, had been destroyed; these circumstances, during the life of his son, he had endeavoured to forget or to palliate. But grief is the father of remorse; and, at the death of that idolized son, the voice at his heart grew imperious, and he lost the power, in losing the motive, of reasoning it away.

Mr. Brown's advertisement was unanswered; and, with the zeal and patience of the Christian proselyte's tribe and calling, the good man commenced, in person, a most elaborate and

painstaking research; for a long time, his endeavours were so ineffectual, that Mr. Brown, in despair, disposed of the two Indian jars for half their value, and heaved a despondent sigh, whenever he saw the great Turkey carpet rolled up in his warehouse, with as much obstinacy as if it never meant to unroll itself again.

At last, however, by dint of indefatigable and minute investigation, he ascertained that the object of his search had resided in London, under a feigned name; from lodging to lodging, and corner to corner, he tracked him, till at length he made himself master of Mordaunt's present retreat. A joyful look did Mr. Brown cast at the great Turkey carpet, as he passed by it, on his way to his street door, on the morning of his intended visit to Mordaunt. "It is a fine thing to have a good heart," said he, in the true style of Sir Christopher Findlater, and he again eyed the carpet. "I really feel quite

happy at the thought of the pleasure I shall give!——"

After a walk through as many obscure and filthy *wynds*, and lanes, and allies, and courts, as ever were threaded by some humble fugitive from justice, the patient Morris came to a sort of court, situated among the miserable hovels in the vicinity of the Tower. He paused, wonderingly, at a dwelling, in which every window was broken, and where the tiles, torn from the roof, lay scattered in forlorn confusion beside the door; where the dingy bricks looked crumbling away from very age and rottenness, and the fabric, which was of great antiquity, seemed so rocking and infirm, that the eye looked upon its distorted and over-hanging position with a sensation of pain and dread; where the very rats had deserted their loathsome cells, from the insecurity of their tenure, and the ragged mothers of the abject neighbourhood forbade their

brawling children to wander under the threatening walls, lest they should keep the promise of their mouldering aspect, and, falling, bare to the obstructed and sickly day the secrets of their prison house. Girt with the foul and reeking lairs of that extreme destitution which necessity urges irresistibly into guilt, and excluded, by filthy allies, and an eternal atmosphere of smoke and rank vapour, from the blessed sun, and the pure air of Heaven, the miserable mansion seemed set apart for every disease to couch within—too perilous even for the hunted criminal — too dreary even for the beggar to prefer it to the bare hedge, or the inhospitable porch, beneath whose mockery of shelter the frosts of winter had so often numbed him into sleep.

Thrice did the heavy and silver-hilted cane of Mr. Brown resound upon the door, over which was a curious carving of a lion dormant,

and a date, of which only the two numbers 15 were discernible. Roused by a note so unusual, and an apparition so unwontedly smug, as the worthy Morris, a whole legion of dingy and smoke-dried brats, came trooping from the surrounding huts, and with many an elvish cry, and strange oath, and cabalistic word, which thrilled the respectable marrow of Mr. Brown, they collected in a gaping, and, to his alarmed eye, a menacing group, as near to the house as their fears and parents would permit them.

"It is very dangerous," thought Mr. Brown, looking shiveringly up at the hanging and tottering roof, "and very appalling," as he turned to the ragged crowd of infant reprobates which began with every moment to increase. At last he summoned courage, and inquired, in a tone half soothing and half dignified, if they could inform him how to obtain admittance, or how to arouse the inhabitants.

An old crone, leaning out of an opposite window, with matted hair hanging over a begrimed and shrivelled countenance, made answer. 'No one,' she said, in her peculiar dialect, which the *digne citoyen* scarcely comprehended, 'lived there, or had done so for years;' but Brown knew better; and while he was asserting the fact, a girl put her head out of another hovel, and said that she had sometimes seen, at the dusk of the evening, a man leave the house, but whether any one else lived in it, she could not tell. Again Mr. Brown sounded an alarm, but no answer came forth, and in great fear and trembling he applied violent hands to the door; it required but little force: it gave way; he entered; and, jealous of the entrance of the mob without, re-closed and barred, as well as he was able, the shattered door. The house was *unnaturally* large for the neighbourhood, and Brown was in doubt whether first to ascend a broken and

perilous staircase, or search the rooms below: he decided on the latter; he found no one, and with a misgiving heart, which nothing but the recollection of the great Turkey carpet could have inspired, he ascended the quaking steps. All was silent. But a door was unclosed. He entered, and saw the object of his search before him.

Over a pallet bent a form, on which, though youth seemed withered, and even pride broken, the unconquerable soul left somewhat of grace and glory, that sustained the beholder's remembrance of better days—a child in its first infancy knelt on the nearer side of the bed, with clasped hands, and vacant eyes that turned towards the intruder, and remained rivetted on his steps with a listless and lack-lustre gaze. But Glendower, or rather Mordaunt, as he bent over the pallet, spoke not, moved not; his eyes were rivetted on one object; his heart seemed turned into

stone, and his veins curdled into ice. Awed and chilled by the breathing desolation of the spot, Brown approached, and spoke, he scarcely knew what; the habitual nature of his thoughts, which cast something ludicrous into his words, doubled, as it were, the terror, because it took from the exaggeration of the scene. "You are," he concluded his address, "the master of Mordaunt Court;" and he placed the letter in the hands of the person he thus greeted.

"Awake, hear me!" cried Algernon to Isabel, as she lay extended on the couch; and the messenger of glad tidings, for the first time seeing her countenance, shuddered, and knew that he was in the chamber of death.

"Awake, my own, own love! Happy days are in store for us yet: our misery is past; you will live, live to bless me in riches, as you have done in want."

Isabel raised her eyes to his, and a smile,

sweet, comforting, and full of love passed the lips which were about to close for ever. "Thank heaven," she murmured, "for your dear sake. It is pleasant to die now, and *thus*!" and she placed the hand that was clasped in her relaxing and wan fingers, within the bosom which had been, for anguished and hopeless years, his asylum and refuge, and which now, when fortune changed, as if it had only breathed as a comfort for his afflictions, was, for the first time, and for ever, to be cold, cold even to him.

"You will live—you will live," cried Mordaunt, in wild and incredulous despair—"in mercy live! You, who have been my angel of hope, do not—O God, O God! do not desert me now!"

But that faithful and loving heart was already deaf to his voice, and the film grew darkening and rapidly over the eye, which still, with undying fondness, sought him out through the

shade and agony of death. Sense and consciousness were gone, and dim and confused images whirled round her soul, struggling a little moment before they sunk into the depth and silence where the past lies buried. But still mindful of *him*, and grasping, as it were, at his remembrance, she clasped, closer and closer, the icy hand which she held, to her breast. "Your hand is cold, dearest—it is cold," said she, faintly, "but I will warm it *here!*"—And so her spirit passed away, and Mordaunt felt afterwards, in a lone and surviving pilgrimage, that her last thought had been kindness to him, and her last act had spoken a forgetfulness even of death, in the cares and devotion of love.

CHAPTER XI.

Change and time take together their flight."

Golden Viole

One evening in autumn, about three years after the date of our last chapter, a stranger on horseback, in deep mourning, dismounted at the door of "the Golden Fleece," in the memorable town of W——. He walked into the tap-room, and asked for a private apartment and accommodation for the night. The landlady, grown considerably plumper than when we first made her acquaintance, just lifted up her eyes

to the stranger's face, and, summoning a short, stout man, (formerly the waiter, now the second helpmate of the comely hostess,) desired him, in a tone which partook somewhat more of the authority indicative of their former relative situations than of the obedience which should have characterized their present, to " shew the gentleman to the Griffin, No. 4."

The stranger smiled as the sound greeted his ears, and he followed not so much the host as the hostess's spouse into the apartment thus designated. A young lady, who some eight years ago little thought that she should still be in a state of single blessedness, and who always honoured with an attentive eye the stray travellers who, from their youth, loneliness, or that ineffable air which usually designates the unmarried man, might be in the same solitary state of life, turned to the landlady, and said—

"Mother, did you observe what a handsome gentleman that was?"

"No," replied the landlady; "I only observed that he brought no servant."

"I wonder," said the daughter, musingly, "if he is in the army?—he has a military air!"

"I suppose he has dined," muttered the landlady to herself, looking towards the larder.

"Have you seen Squire Mordaunt within a short period of time?" said, somewhat abruptly, a little thickset man, who was enjoying his pipe and negus in a sociable way at the window-seat. The characteristics of this personage were, a spruce wig, a bottle nose, an elevated eyebrow, a snuff-coloured skin and coat, and an air of that consequential self-respect which characterizes the philosopher who agrees with the French sage, and sees "no reason in the world why a man should not esteem himself."

"No, indeed, Mr. Bossolton," returned the

landlady; "but I suppose that, as he is now in the parliament-house, he will live less retired. It is a pity that the inside of that noble old hall of his should not be more seen—and after all the old gentleman's improvements, too! They say that the estate now, since the mortgages were paid off, is above ten thousand pounds a year, clear!"

"And, if I am not induced into an error," rejoined Mr. Bossolton, re-filling his pipe, "old Vavasour left a great sum of ready-money besides, which must have been an aid, and an assistance, and an advantage, mark me, Mistress Merrylack, to the owner of Mordaunt-Hall, that has escaped the calculation of your faculty,—and the—and the—faculty of your calculation!"—(*Puff.*)

"You mistake, Mr. Boss," as, in the friendliness of diminutives, Mrs. Merrylack sometimes appellatived the grandiloquent practitioner—

"you mistake: the old gentleman left all his ready money in two bequests—the one to the College of ——, in the University of Oxford, and the other to an hospital in London. I remember the very words of the will—they ran thus, Mr. Boss:—'And whereas my beloved son, had he lived, would have been a member of the College of ——, in the University of Oxford, which he would have adorned by his genius, learning, youthful virtue, and the various qualities which did equal honour to his head and heart, and would have rendered him alike distinguished as the scholar and the Christian—I do devise and bequeath the sum of thirty-seven thousand pounds sterling, now in the English funds,' &c. &c.; and then follows the manner in which he will have his charity vested and bestowed, and all about the prize which shall be for ever designated and termed 'The Vavasour Prize,' and what shall

be the words of the Latin speech which shall be spoken when the said prize be delivered, and a great deal more to that effect: so, then, he passes to the other legacy, of exactly the same sum, to the hospital, usually called and styled ———, in the City of London, and says, 'And whereas we are assured by the Holy Scriptures, which, in these days of blasphemy and sedition, it becomes every true Briton and member of the Established Church to support, that 'charity doth cover a multitude of sins'—so I do give and devise,' &c. &c., 'to be for ever termed in the deeds,' &c. &c. 'of the said hospital, 'The Vavasour Charity;' and always provided that, on the anniversary of the day of my death, there be such prayer as shall hereafter in this my last will be dictated, for my soul, and a sermon afterwards, by a clergyman of the Established Church, on any text appropriate to the day and deed so comme-

morated.'—But the conclusion is most beautiful, Mr. Bossolton :—' And now, having discharged my duties, to the best of my humble ability, to my God, my king, and my country, and dying in the full belief of the Protestant Church as by law established, I do set my hand and seal,' &c. &c."

"A very pleasing, and charitable, and devout, and virtuous, testament or will, Mistress Merrylack," said Mr. Bossolton; "and in a time when anarchy with gigantic strides does devastate, and devour, and harm, the good old customs of our ancestors and forefathers, and tramples with its poisonous breath the Magna Charta, and the glorious Revolution, it is beautiful—ay, and sweet—mark you, Mrs. Merrylack, to behold a gentleman of the aristocratic classes, or grades, supporting the institutions of his country with such remarkable energy of sentiments, and with—and with—

Mistress Merrylack—with sentiments of such remarkable energy." (*Puff.*)

"Pray," said the daughter, adjusting her ringlets by a little glass which hung over the tap, "how long has Mr. Mordaunt's lady been dead?"

"Oh! she died just before the squire came to the property," quoth the mother. "Poor thing—she was so pretty. I am sure I cried for a whole hour when I heard it! I think it was three years last month when it happened. Old Mr. Vavasour died about two months afterwards."

"The afflicted husband," (said Mr. Bossolton, who was the victim of a most fiery Mrs. Boss at home,) "went into foreign lands or parts, or, as it is vulgarly termed, the continent, immediately after an event, or occurrence, so fatal to the cup of his prosperity, and the

sunshine of his enjoyment. Did he not, Mrs. Merrylack?" *(Puff.)*

"He did. And you know, Mr. Boss, he only returned about six months ago."

"And of what borough, or burgh, or town, or city, is he the member and representative?" asked Mr. Jeremiah Bossolton, putting another lump of sugar into his negus. "I have heard, it is true, but my memory is short; and, in the multitude and multifariousness of my professional engagements, I am often led into a forgetfulness of matters less important in their variety, and less — less various in their importance." *(Puff.)*

"Why," answered Mrs. Merrylack, "somehow or other, I quite forget too; but it is some distant borough. The gentlemen wanted him to stand for the county, but he would not hear of it: perhaps he did not like the publicity of the thing, for he is mighty reserved."

"Proud, haughty, arrogant, and assumptious!" said Mr. Bossolton, with a puff of unusual length.

"Nay, nay," said the daughter, (young people are always the first to defend,) "I'm sure he's not proud—he does a mort of good, and has the sweetest smile possible! I wonder if he'll marry again! He is very young yet, not above two or three-and-thirty." (The kind damsel would not have thought two or three-and-thirty *very* young some years ago. We grow wonderfully indulgent to the age of other people as we grow older ourselves!)

"And what an eye he has!" said the landlady. "Well, for my part—but, bless me. Here, John—John—John —waiter — husband, I mean—here's a carriage and four at the door. Lizzy, dear, is my cap right?"

And mother, daughter, and husband, all flocked, charged with simper, courtesy, and bow,

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS

to receive their expected guests. With a disappointment, which we who keep not inns, can but very imperfectly conceive, the trio beheld a single personage—a valet—descend from the box, open the carriage door, and take out a desk!—Of all things human, male or female, the said carriage was utterly empty.

The valet bustled up to the landlady: "My master's here, ma'am, I think—rode on before!"

"And who is your master!" asked Mrs. Merrylack—a thrill of alarm, and the thought of No. 4, coming across her at the same time.

"Who!" said the valet, rubbing his hands; "who!—why Clarence Talbot Linden, Esq., of Scarsdale Park, county of York, late Secretary of Legation at the court of ——, now M.P., and one of His Majesty's under Secretaries of State."

"Mercy upon us!" cried the astounded landlady, "and No. 4!—only think of it. Run, John,

--John—run—light a fire—(the night's cold, I think)—in the Elephant, No. 16—beg the gentleman's pardon—say it was occupied till now; ask what he'll have for dinner—fish, flesh, fowl, steaks, joints, chops, tarts—or, if it's too late (but it's quite early yet—you may put back the day an hour or so), ask what he'll have for supper—run, John, run:—what's the oaf staying for—run, I tell you!—Pray, Sir, walk in (to the valet, our old friend Mr. Harrison)—you'll be hungry after your journey, I think; no ceremony, I beg."

"He's not so handsome as his master," said Miss Elizabeth, glancing at Harrison discontentedly—"but he does not look like a married man, somehow. I'll just step up stairs, and change my cap; it would be but civil if the gentleman's gentleman sups with us."

Meanwhile Clarence, having been left alone in the quiet enjoyment of No. 4, had examined

the little apartment with an interest not altogether unmingled with painful reflections. There are few persons, however fortunate, who can look back to eight years of their life, and not feel somewhat of disappointment in the retrospect: few persons, whose fortunes the world envy, to whom the token of past time, suddenly obtruded on their remembrance, does not awaken hopes destroyed, and wishes deceived, which that world has never known. We tell our triumphs to the crowd, but our own hearts are the sole confidants of our sorrows. "Twice," said Clarence to himself, "twice before have I been in this humble room; the first was when, at the age of eighteen, I was just launched into the world—a vessel which had for its only hope the motto of the chivalrous Sidney,—

"Aut viam inveniam, aut faciam;"

yet, humble and nameless as I was, how well

I can recal the exaggerated ambition, nay, the *certainty* of success, as well as its *desire*, which then burnt within me. I smile now at the over-weening vanity of those hopes—some, indeed, realized, but how many nipped and withered for ever! seeds, of which a few fell upon rich ground, and prospered, but of which how far the greater number were scattered, some upon the way-side, and were devoured by immediate cares, some on stony places, and when the sun of manhood was up, they were scorched, and because they had no root, withered away; and some among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.—I am now rich, honoured, high in the favour of courts, and not altogether unknown or unesteemed by the *arbitrio popularis auræ:* and yet I almost think I was happier when, in that flush of youth and inexperience, I looked forth into the wide world, and imagined that from every corner

would spring up a triumph for my vanity, or an object for my affections. The next time I stood in this little spot, I was no longer the dependant of a precarious charity, or the idle adventurer, who had no stepping-stone but his ambition. I was then just declared the heir of wealth, which I could not rationally have hoped for five years before, and which was in itself, sufficient to satisfy the aspirings of ordinary men. But I was corroded with anxieties for the object of my love, and regret for the friend whom I had lost: perhaps the eagerness of my heart for the one rendered me, for the moment, too little mindful of the other; but, in after years, memory took ample atonement for that temporary suspension of her duties. How often have I recalled, in this world of cold ties and false hearts, that true and generous friend, from whose lessons my mind took improvement, and from whose warnings, example; who was to me, living,

a father, and from whose generosity, whatever worldly advantages I have enjoyed, or distinctions I have gained, are derived! *Then* I was going with a torn, yet credulous heart, to pour forth my secret and my passion to *her*, and, within one little week from thence, how shipwrecked of all hope, object, and future happiness, I was! Perhaps, at that time, I did not sufficiently consider the excusable cautions of the world—I should not have taken such umbrage at her father's letter—I should have revealed to him my birth, and accession of fortune—nor bartered the truth of certain happiness for the trials and manœuvres of romance. But it is too late to repent now. By this time my image must be wholly obliterated from her heart:—she has seen me in the crowd, and passed me coldly by—her cheek is pale, but not for me; and in a little—little while—she will be another's, and lost to me for ever! Yet have I never forgotten her through

change or time—the hard and harsh projects of ambition—the labours of business, or the engrossing schemes of political intrigue.—Never!—but this is a vain and foolish subject of reflection now."

And not the *less* reflecting upon it for that sage and veracious recollection, Clarence turned from the window, against which he had been leaning, and drawing one of the four chairs to the solitary table, he sate down, moody and disconsolate, and leaning his face upon his hands, pursued the confused, yet not disconnected, thread of his meditations.

The door abruptly opened, and Mr. Merrylack appeared.

"Dear me, Sir!" cried he, "a thousand pities you should have been put here, Sir! Pray step up stairs, Sir; the front drawing-room is just vacant, Sir; what will you please to have for dinner, Sir," &c. &c., according to the in-

structions of his wife. To Mr. Merrylack's great dismay, Clarence, however, resolutely refused all attempts at locomotion, and contenting himself with entrusting the dinner to the discretion of the landlady, desired to be left alone till it was prepared.

Now, when Mr. John Merrylack returned to the tap-room, and communicated the stubborn adherence to No. 4, manifested by its occupier, our good hostess felt exceedingly discomposed. "You are *so* stupid, John," said she, "I'll go and expostulate like with him;" and she was rising for that purpose, when Harrison, who was taking particularly good care of himself, drew her back: "I know my master's temper better than you do, ma'am," said he; "and when he is in the humour to be stubborn, the very devil himself could not get him out of it. I dare say he wants to be left to himself: he is very fond of being alone now and then; state affairs,

you know, (added the valet, mysteriously touching his forehead), and even I dare not disturb him for the world; so make yourself easy, and I'll go to him when *he* has dined, and *I* supped. There is time enough for No. 4, when we have taken care of number *one*.—Miss, your health!"

The landlady, reluctantly overruled in her design, reseated herself.

"Mr. Clarence Linden, M. P., did you say, Sir?" said the learned Jeremiah: "surely, I have had that name or appellation in my books, but I cannot, at this instant of time, recal to my recollection the exact date and circumstance of my professional services to the gentleman so designated, styled, or, I may say, termed!"

"Can't say, I'm sure, Sir," said Harrison—"lived with my master many years—never had the pleasure of seeing you before, nor of travelling this road—a very hilly road it is,

Sir. Miss, this negus is as bright as your eyes, and as warm as my admiration."

"Oh, Sir!"

"Pray," said Mr. Merrylack, who, like most of his tribe, was a bit of a politician; "is it the Mr. Linden who made that long speech in the House the other day?"

"Precisely, Sir. He is a very eloquent gentleman, indeed; pity he speaks so little—never made but that one long speech since he has been in the House, and a capital one it was, too. You saw how the prime minister complimented him upon it. 'A speech,' said his lordship, 'which had united the graces of youthful genius, with the sound calculations of matured experience!'"

"Did the prime minister really so speak?" said Jeremiah: "what a beautiful, and noble, and sensible compliment! I will examine my books when I go home—'the graces of youthful

genius, with the sound calculations of matured experience!' "

"If he is in the Parliament House," quoth the landlady, "I suppose he will know our Mr. Mordaunt, when the squire takes his seat, next —what do you call it—sessions?"

"Know Mr. Mordaunt!" said the valet. "It is to see him that *we* have come down here. We intended to have gone there to-night, but master thought it too late, and I saw he was in a melancholy humour; we therefore resolved to come here; and so master took one of the horses from the groom, whom we have left behind with the other, and came on alone. I take it, he must have been in this town before, for he described the inn so well.—Capital cheese this; as mild—as mild as your sweet smile, Miss!"

"Oh! Sir!"

"Pray, *Mistress* Merrylack," said Mr.

Jeremiah Bossolton, depositing his pipe on the table, and awakening from a profound reverie in which, for the last five minutes, his senses had been buried —" pray, Mistress Merrylack, do you not call to your mind, or your reminiscence, or your — your recollection, a young gentleman, equally comely in his aspect and blandiloquent (ehem !) in his address, who had the misfortune to have his arm severely contused and afflicted by a violent kick from Mr. Mordaunt's horse, even in the yard in which your stables are situated, and who remained for two or three days in your house, or tavern, or hotel ? I do remember that you were grievously perplexed because of his name, the initials of which only he gave, or intrusted, or communicated to you, until you did exam—"

" I remember," interrupted Miss Elizabeth —" I remember well—a very beautiful young gentleman, who had a letter directed to be

left here, addressed to him by the letters C. L., and who was afterwards kicked, and who admired your cap, mother, and whose name *was* Clarence Linden. You remember it well enough, mother, surely?"

"I *think* I do, Lizzy," said the landlady, slowly; for her memory, not so much occupied as her daughter's by beautiful young gentlemen, struggled slowly with dim ideas of the various travellers and visitors with whom her house had been honoured, before she came, at last, to the reminiscence of Clarence Linden. "I *think* I do—and Squire Mordaunt was very attentive to him—and he broke one of the panes of glass in No. 8, and gave me half a guinea to pay for it. I *do remember*, perfectly, Lizzy. So that is the Mr. Linden now here!—only think!"

"I should not have known him, certainly," said Miss Elizabeth; "he is grown so much taller, and his hair looks quite dark now, and

his face is much thinner than it was; but he's very handsome still—is he not, Sir?" turning to the valet.

"Ah! ah! well enough," said Mr. Harrison, stretching out his right leg, and falling away a little to the left, in the manner adopted by the renowned Gil Blas, in his address to the fair Laura—"Well enough; but he's a little too tall and thin, *I* think."

Mr. Harrison's faults in shape were certainly not those of being too tall and thin.

"Perhaps so!" said Miss Elizabeth, who scented the vanity by a kindred instinct, and had her own reasons for pampering it—"perhaps so!"

"But he is a great favourite with the ladies all the same; however, he only loves one lady. Ah, but I must not say who, though I know. However, she is so handsome; such eyes, they would go through you like a skewer, but not like

yours, yours, miss, which, I vow and protest, are as bright as a service of plate."

"Oh, Sir!"

And in this gossip the time slipped away, till Clarence's dinner, and his valet's supper, being fairly over, Mr. Harrison presented himself to his master a perfectly different being in attendance to what he was in companionship—flippancy, impertinence, forwardness, all merged in the steady, sober, serious demeanour which characterize the respectful and well bred domestic.

Clarence's orders were soon given. They were limited to the appurtenances of writing; and as soon as Harrison re-appeared with his master's desk and *portefeuille*, he was dismissed for the night.

Very slowly did Clarence settle himself to his task, and attempt to escape the ennui of his solitude, or the restlessness of thought feeding upon itself, by inditing the following epistle.

TO THE DUKE OF HAVERFIELD.

"I was very unfortunate, my dear duke, to miss seeing you, when I called in Arlington-street, the evening before last, for I had a great deal to say to you—something upon public and a little upon private affairs. I will reserve the latter, since I only am the person concerned, for a future opportunity. With respect to the former, * * * * *

* * * * * *

* * * * *

"And now having finished the political part of my letter, let me congratulate you most sincerely upon your approaching marriage with Miss Trevanion. I do not know her myself; but I remember that she was the bosom friend of Lady Flora Ardenne, whom I have often heard speak of her in the highest and most affectionate

terms, so that I imagine her brother could not better atone to you for dishonestly carrying off the fair Julia some three years ago, than by giving you his sister in honourable and orthodox exchange—the gold armour for the brazen.

"As for my lot, though I ought not, at this moment, to dim yours by dwelling upon it, you know how long, how constantly, how ardently I have loved Lady Flora Ardenne—how, for her sake, I have refused opportunities of alliance which might have gratified, to the utmost, that worldliness of heart which so many who saw me only in the crowd have been pleased to impute to me. You know that neither pleasure, nor change, nor the insult I received from her parents, nor the sudden indifference which I so little deserved from herself, have ever been able to obliterate her image. You will therefore sympathize with me, when I inform you that there is no longer any doubt of her marriage

with Borodaile (or rather Lord Ullswater, since his father's death), directly the sixth month of his mourning expires; to this period only two months remain.

"Heavens! when one thinks over the past, how incredulous one could become to the future: when I recall all the tokens of love I received from that woman, I cannot persuade myself that they are now all forgotten, or rather, all lavished upon another.

"But I do not blame her—may she be happier with him than she could have been with me; and that hope shall whisper peace to regrets which I have been foolish to indulge so long, and which it is perhaps well for me that they are about to be rendered for ever unavailing.

"I am staying at an inn, without books, companions, or any thing to beguile time and thought, but this pen, ink, and paper. You

will see, therefore, a reason and an excuse for my scribbling on to you, till my two sheets are filled, and the hour of ten (one can't well go to bed earlier) arrived.

"You remember having often heard me speak of a very extraordinary man whom I met in Italy, and with whom I became intimate. He returned to England some months ago; and on hearing it, my desire of renewing our acquaintance was so great, that I wrote to invite myself to his house. He gave me what is termed a very obliging answer, and left the choice of time to myself. You see now, most noble Festus, the reason of my journey hitherwards.

"His house, a fine old mansion, is situated about five or six miles from this town; and, as I arrived here late in the evening, and knew that his habits were reserved and peculiar, I thought it better to take 'mine ease in my inn'

for this night, and defer my visit to Mordaunt Court till to-morrow morning. In truth, I was not averse to renewing an old acquaintance—not, as you in your malice would suspect, with my hostess, but with her house. Some years ago, when I was eighteen, I first made a slight acquaintance with Mordaunt at this very inn, and now, at twenty-six, I am glad to have one evening to myself on the same spot, and retrace here all that has since happened to me.

"Now, do not be alarmed; I am not going to inflict upon you the unquiet retrospect with which I have just been vexing myself: no, I will rather speak to you of my acquaintance and host to be. I have said that I first met Mordaunt some years since at this inn—an accident, for which his horse was to blame, brought us acquainted—I spent a day at his house, and was much interested in his conversation; since then, we did not meet till about two years and a

half ago, when we were in Italy together. During the intermediate interval Mordaunt had married—lost his property by a lawsuit—disappeared from the world (whither none knew) for some years—recovered the estate he had lost by the death of his kinsman's heir, and shortly afterwards by that of the kinsman himself, and had become a widower, with one only child, a beautiful little girl of about four years old. He lived in perfect seclusion, avoided all intercourse with society, and seemed so perfectly unconscious of having ever seen me before, whenever in our rides or walks we met, that I could not venture to intrude myself on a reserve so rigid and unbroken as that which characterized his habits and life.

"The gloom and loneliness, however, in which Mordaunt's days were spent, were far from partaking of that selfishness so common, almost so *necessarily* common, to recluses.

Wherever he had gone in his travels through Italy, he had left light and rejoicing behind him. In his residence at ——, while unknown to the great and gay, he was familiar with the outcast and the destitute. The prison, the hospital, the sordid cabins of want, the abodes (so frequent in Italy, that emporium of artists and poets) where genius struggled against poverty and its own improvidence — all these were the spots to which his visits were paid, and in which 'the very stones prated of his whereabout.' It was a strange and striking contrast to compare the sickly enthusiasm of those who flocked to Italy, to lavish their sentiment upon statues, and their wealth in the modern impositions palmed upon their gross tastes as the masterpieces of ancient art — it was a noble contrast, I say, to compare that ludicrous and idle enthusiasm with the quiet and wholesome energy of mind and heart which

led Mordaunt, not to pour forth worship and homage to the unconscious monuments of the dead, but to console, to relieve, and to sustain, the woes, the wants, the feebleness, of the living.

"Yet, while he was thus employed in reducing the miseries and enlarging the happiness of others, the most settled melancholy seemed to mark himself 'as her own.' Clad in the deepest mourning, a stern and unbroken gloom sat for ever upon his countenance. I have observed, that if in his walks or rides any one, especially of the better classes, appeared to approach, he would strike into a new path. He could not bear even the scrutiny of a glance or the fellowship of a moment; and his mien, high and haughty, seemed not only to repel others, but to contradict the meekness and charity which his own actions so invariably and unequivocally displayed. It must, indeed, have

been a powerful exertion of principle over feeling, which induced him voluntarily to seek the abodes and intercourse of the rude beings he blessed and relieved.

"We met at two or three places to which my weak and imperfect charity had led me, especially at the house of a sickly and distressed artist: for in former life I had intimately known one of that profession; and I have since attempted to transfer to his brethren that debt of kindness, which an early death forbade me to discharge to himself. It was thus that I first became acquainted with Mordaunt's occupations and pursuits: for what ennobled his benevolence was the remarkable obscurity in which it was veiled. It was in disguise and in secret that his generosity flowed; and so studiously did he conceal his name, and hide even his features, during his brief visits to 'the house of mourning,' that none but one who (like myself) is a

close and minute observer and investigator of whatever has once become an object of interest, could have traced his hand in the various works of happiness it had aided or created.

"One day, among some old ruins, I met him with his young daughter. By great good fortune I preserved the latter, who had wandered away from her father, from a fall of loose stones which would inevitably have crushed her. I was myself much hurt by my effort, having received upon my shoulder a fragment of the falling stones; and thus our old acquaintance was renewed, and gradually ripened into intimacy: not, I must own, without great patience and constant endeavour on my part; for his gloom and lonely habits rendered him utterly impracticable of access to any (as Lord Aspeden would say) but a diplomatist. I saw a great deal of him during the six months I remained in Italy, and—but you know already how warmly

I admire his extraordinary powers, and venerate his character. — Lord Aspeden's recal to England separated us.

"A general election ensued. I was returned for ———. I entered eagerly into domestic politics—your friendship, Lord Aspeden's kindness, my own wealth and industry, made my success almost unprecedentedly rapid. Engaged, heart and hand, in those minute yet engrossing labours for which the aspirant in parliamentary and state intrigue must unhappily forego the more enlarged though abstruser speculations of general philosophy, and of that morality which may be termed *universal* politics, I have necessarily been employed in very different pursuits from those to which Mordaunt's contemplations are devoted, yet have I often recalled his maxims, with admiration at their depth, and obtained applause for opinions which were only imper-

fectly filtered from the pure springs of his own.

"It is about six months since he has returned to England, and he has very lately obtained a seat in parliament—so that we may trust soon to see his talents displayed upon a more public and enlarged theatre than they hitherto have been; and though I fear his politics will be opposed to ours, I anticipate his public *debût* with that interest which genius, even when adverse to oneself, always inspires. Yet I confess that I am desirous to see and converse with him once more in the familiarity and kindness of private intercourse. The rage of party, the narrowness of sectarian zeal, soon exclude from our friendship all those who differ from our opinions; and it is like sailors holding commune for the last time with each other, before their several vessels are divided by the perilous and uncertain sea, to

confer in peace and retirement for a little while with those who are about to be launched with us in that same unquiet ocean, where any momentary caprice of the winds may disjoin us for ever, and where our very union is only a sympathy in toil, and a fellowship in danger.

"Adieu, my friend: it is fortunate for me that our public opinions are so closely allied, and that I may so reasonably calculate in private upon the happiness and honour of subscribing myself your affectionate friend,

"C. L."

Such was the letter to which we shall leave the explanation of much that has taken place within the last three years of our tale, and which, in its tone, will serve to shew the kindness and generosity of heart and feeling that mingled (rather increased than abated by the time which brought wisdom) with the hardy activity and

resolute ambition that characterized the mind of our "Disowned."—We now consign him to such repose as the best bedroom in the Golden Fleece can afford, and conclude the chapter:

> "C'est assez parlé: prenons un peu d'haleine:
> Ma main, pour cette fois, commence à se lasser:
> Finissons: mais demain, Muse, à recommencer."*

* Boileau.

CHAPTER XII.

"Though the wilds of enchantment all vernal and bright,
In the days of delusion by fancy combined
With the vanishing phantoms of love and delight,
Abandon my soul, like a dream of the night,
And leave but a desert behind.

"Be hush'd, my dark spirit, for Wisdom condemns
When the faint and the feeble deplore;
Be strong as the rock of the ocean that stems
A thousand wild waves on the shore!"

CAMPBELL.

"SHALL I order the carriage round, Sir?" said Harrison, "it is past one."

"Yes—yet stay—the day is fine—I will ride—let the carriage come on in the evening—see that my horse is saddled—you looked to his mash last night?"

"I did, Sir. He seems wonderfully fresh: would you please to have me stay here with the carriage, Sir, till the groom comes on with the other horse?"

"Ay; do—I don't know yet how far strange servants may be welcome where I am going."

"Now, that's lucky!" said Harrison to himself, as he shut the door: "I shall have a good five hours' opportunity of making my court here. Miss Elizabeth is really a very pretty girl, and might not be a bad match. I don't see any brothers; who knows but she may succeed to the inn—hem! A servant may be ambitious as well as his master, I suppose?"

So meditating, Harrison sauntered to the stables—saw (for he was an admirable servant, and could, at a pinch, dress a horse as well as its master) that Clarence's beautiful steed received the utmost nicety of grooming which the ostler could bestow—led it himself to the door

—held the stirrup for his master, with the mingled humility and grace of his profession, and then strutted away—"pride on his brow, and glory in his eye"—to be the cynosure and oracle of the tap-room.

Meanwhile, Linden rode slowly onwards. As he passed that turn of the town by which he had for the first time entered it, the recollection of the eccentric and would-be gipsy flashed upon him. "I wonder," thought he, "where that singular man is now—whether he still preserves his itinerant and woodland tastes—

"'Si flumina Sylvasque inglorius amet,'

or whether, as his family increased in age or number, he has turned from his wanderings, and at length found out 'the peaceful hermitage.' How glowingly the whole scene of that night comes across me—the wild tents, their wilder habitants, the mingled bluntness, poetry, honest good nature, and spirit of enterprise,

which constituted the chief's nature—the jovial meal and mirth round the wood fire, and beneath the quiet stars, and the eagerness and zest with which I then mingled in the merriment. Alas!—how ill the fastidiousness and refinement of after days repay us for the elastic, buoyant, ready zeal, with which our first youth enters into whatever is joyous, without pausing to ask if its cause and nature be congenial to our habits, or kindred to our tastes. After all, there really *was* something philosophical in the romance of the jovial gipsy, childish as it seemed; and I should like much to know, if the philosophy has got the better of the romance, or the romance, growing into habit, become common-place, and lost both its philosophy and its enthusiasm. Well, after I leave Mordaunt, I will try and find out my old friend."

With this resolution, Clarence's thoughts took a new channel, and dwelt upon Mordaunt, till he found himself entering his domain. As he

rode through the park, where brake and tree were glowing in the yellow tints with which Autumn, like Ambition, gilds ere it withers, he paused for a moment, to recal the scene, as he last beheld it, to his memory. It was then Spring—Spring in its first and flushest glory—when not a blade of grass but sent a perfume to the air—the happy air,

> "Making sweet music while the young leaves danced;"

when every cluster of the brown fern, that now lay dull and motionless around him, and among which the melancholy deer stood afar off, gazing upon the intruder, was vocal with the blithe melodies of the infant year—the sharp, yet sweet, voices of birds—"those fairy-formed, and many coloured things"—and (heard at intervals) the chirp of the merry grasshopper, or the hum of the awakened bee. He sighed, as he now looked around, and recalled the change,

both of time and season; and with that fondness of heart, which causes man to knit his own little life to the varieties of Time, the signs of Heaven, or the revolutions of Nature, he recognized something kindred in the change of scene, to the change of thought and feeling which years had wrought in the beholder.

Awaking from his reverie, he hastened his horse's pace, and was soon within sight of the house. Vavasour, during the few years he had possessed the place, had conducted and carried through improvements and additions to the old mansion, upon a scale equally costly and judicious. The heavy and motley magnificence of the architecture in which the house had been built, remained unaltered; but a wing on either side, though exactly corresponding in style with the intermediate building, gave, by the long colonnade which ran across the one, and the stately windows which adorned the other, an air not

only of grander extent, but more cheerful lightness to the massy and antiquated pile. It was, assuredly, in the point of view by which Clarence now approached it, a structure which possessed few superiors in point of size and effect; and harmonized so well with the noble extent of the park, the ancient woods, and the venerable avenues, that a very slight effort of imagination and love of antiquarian musings might have poured from the massive portals the pageantries of old days, and the gay galliard of chivalric romance with which the scene was in such accordance, and which in a former age it had so often witnessed.

Ah, little could any one who looked upon that gorgeous pile, and the broad lands which, beyond the boundaries of the park, swelled on the hills of the distant landscape, studded at frequent intervals with the spires and villages, which made a moiety of the wide baronies of Mordaunt

—little could he who thus gazed around, have imagined that the owner of all he surveyed had passed the glory and verdure of his manhood in the bitterest struggles with gnawing want, and rebellious pride, and urgent passion, without friend or aid but his own haughty and supporting virtue, sentenced to bear yet in his wasted and barren heart the sign of the storm he had resisted, and the scathed token of the lightning he had braved. None but Crauford, who had his own reasons for taciturnity, and the itinerant broker, easily bribed into silence, had ever known of the *extreme* poverty from which Mordaunt had passed to his rightful possessions. It was whispered, indeed, that he had been reduced to narrow and straitened circumstances; but the whisper had been only the breath of rumour, and the imagined poverty far short of the reality: for the pride of Mordaunt (the great, almost the sole failing in his charac-

ter), could not endure that all he had borne and baffled should be bared to the vulgar eye; and, by a rare anomaly of mind, indifferent as he was to renown, he was morbidly susceptible of shame.

When Clarence rung at the ivy-covered porch, and made inquiry for Mordaunt, he was informed that the latter was in the park, by the river, where most of his hours, during the day-time, were spent.

"Shall I send to acquaint him that you are come, Sir?" said the servant.

"No," answered Clarence, "I will leave my horse to one of the grooms, and stroll down to the river in search of your master."

Suiting the action to the word, he dismounted, consigned his steed to the *palefrenier*, and, following the direction indicated to him, bent his way to the "river."

As he descended the hill, the brook (for it

did not deserve, though it received a higher name), opened enchantingly upon his view. Amidst the fragrant reed and the wild flower still sweet, though fading, and tufts of tedded grass, all of which, when crushed beneath the foot, sent a mingled tribute, *copia narium*, to its sparkling waves, the wild stream took its gladsome course, now contracted by gloomy firs, which, bending over the water, cast somewhat of their own sadness upon its surface,—now glancing forth from the shade, as it "broke into dimples and laughed in the sun,"—now washing the gnarled and spreading roots of some lonely ash, which, hanging over it still and droopingly, seemed, the hermit of the scene, to moralize on its noisy and various wanderings,—now winding round the hill, and losing itself at last amidst thick copses, where day did never more than wink and glimmer—and where, at night, its waters, brawling on their stony channel, seemed

like a spirit's wail, and harmonized well with the scream of the grey owl, wheeling from her dim retreat, or the moaning and rare sound of some solitary deer.

As Clarence's eye roved admiringly over the scene before him, it dwelt at last upon a small building situated on the wildest part of the opposite bank: it was entirely overgrown with ivy, and the outline only remained to shew the gothic antiquity of the architecture. It was a single square tower, built none knew when or wherefore, and, consequently, the spot of many vagrant guesses and wild legends among the surrounding gossips. On approaching yet nearer, he perceived, alone and seated on a little mound beside the tower, the object of his search.

Mordaunt was gazing with vacant yet earnest eye upon the waters beneath; and so intent was either his mood or look, that he was

unaware of Clarence's approach. Tears fast and large were rolling from those haughty eyes, which men who shrunk from their indifferent glance little deemed were capable of such weak and feminine emotion. Far, far through the aching void of time were the thoughts of the reft and solitary mourner; they were dwelling, in all the vivid and keen intensity of grief which dies not, upon the day when, about that hour and on that spot, he sate, with Isabel's young cheek upon his bosom, and listened to a voice which was now only for his dreams. He recalled the moment when the fatal letter, charged with change and poverty, was given to him, and the pang which had rent his heart as he looked around upon a scene over which spring had then just breathed, and which he was about to leave to a fresh summer and a new lord; and then, that deep, fond, half-fearful gaze with which Isabel had

met his eye, and the feeling, proud even in its melancholy, with which he had drawn towards his breast all that earth had now for him, and thanked God in his heart of hearts that *she* was spared.

"And I am once more master," (thought he), "not only of all I then held, but all which my wealthier forefathers possessed. But she who was the sharer of my sorrows and want—oh, where is she? rather, ah! rather a hundredfold that her hand was still clasped in mine, and her spirit supporting me through poverty and trial, and her soft voice murmuring the comfort that steals away care, than to be thus heaped with wealth and honour, and *alone*—alone, where never more can come love, or hope, or the yearnings of affection, or the sweet fulness of a heart that seems fathomless in its tenderness, yet overflows! Had my lot, when she left me, been still the steepings of bitterness, the stings

of penury, the moody silence of hope, the damp and chill of sunless and aidless years, which rust the very iron of the soul away; had my lot been thus, as it had been, I could have borne her death, I could have looked upon her grave, and wept not—nay, I could have comforted my own struggles with the memory of her escape; but thus, at the very moment of prosperity, to leave the altered and promising earth, 'to house with darkness and with death;' no little gleam of sunshine, no brief recompense for the agonizing past, no momentary respite between tears and the tomb. Oh, Heaven! what—what avail is a wealth which comes too late, when she who could alone have made wealth, bliss, is dust; and the light that should have gilded many and happy days, flings only a wearying and ghastly glare upon the tomb?"

Starting from these reflections, Mordaunt half-unconsciously rose, and dashing the tears

from his eyes, was about to plunge into the neighbouring thicket, when looking up, he beheld Clarence, now within a few paces of him. He started, and seemed for one moment irresolute whether to meet or shun his advance; but probably deeming it too late for the latter, he banished, by one of those violent efforts with which men of proud and strong minds vanquish emotion, all outward sign of the past agony: and hastening towards his guest, greeted him with a welcome, which though, from ordinary hosts it might have seemed cold, appeared to Clarence, who knew his temper, more cordial than he had ventured to anticipate.

CHAPTER XIII.

"My father urged me sair,
But my mither did na speak,
Though she looked into my face,
Till my heart war like to break."
Auld Robin Gray.

"It is rather singular," said Lady Westborough to her daughter, as they sate alone one afternoon in the music-room, at Westborough Park, "it is rather singular that Lord Ulswater should not have come yet. He said he should certainly be here before three o'clock."

"You know, mamma, that he has some military duties to detain him at W——," answered

Lady Flora, bending over a drawing, in which she appeared to be earnestly engaged.

"True, my dear, and it was very kind in Lord ——, to quarter the troop he commands in his native county; and very fortunate that W——, being his head quarters, should also be so near us. But I cannot conceive that any duty can be sufficiently strong to detain him from you," added Lady Westborough, who had been accustomed, all her life, to a devotion unparalleled in this age. "You seem very indulgent, Flora."

"Alas!—she should rather say, very indifferent," thought Lady Flora; but she did not give her thought utterance—she only looked up at her mother for a moment, and smiled faintly.

Whether there was something in that smile, or in the pale cheek of her daughter, that touched her, we know not, but Lady Westborough *was* touched; she threw her arms round

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS...

Lady Flora's neck, kissed her fondly, and said, "You do not seem well, to-day, my love—are you?"

"Oh!—very—very well," answered Lady Flora, returning her mother's caress, and hiding her eyes, to which the tears had started.

"My child," said Lady Westborough, "you know that both myself and your father are very desirous to see you married to Lord Ulswater—of high and ancient birth, of great wealth, young, unexceptionable in person and character, and warmly attached to you—it would be impossible even for the sanguine heart of a parent to ask for you a more eligible match. But if the thought really does make you wretched—and yet, how can it?"

"I have consented," said Flora, gently: "all I ask is, do not speak to me more of the—the event than you can avoid."

Lady Westborough pressed her hand, sighed, and replied not.

The door opened, and the marquis, who had within the last year become a cripple, with the great man's malady, *dira podagra*, was wheeled in on his easy chair: close behind him followed Lord Ulswater.

"I have brought you," said the marquis, who piqued himself on a vein of dry humour, "I have brought you, young lady, a consolation for my ill humours. Few gouty old fathers make themselves as welcome as I do—eh, Ulswater!"

"Dare I apply to myself Lord Westborough's compliment?" said the young nobleman, advancing towards Lady Flora; and drawing his seat near her, he entered into that whispered conversation, so significant of courtship. But there was little in Lady Flora's manner, by which an experienced eye would have detected the bride elect: no sudden blush, no downcast, yet side-long look, no trembling of the small,

and fairy-like hand, no indistinct confusion of the voice struggling with unanalysed emotions. No—all was calm, cold, listless; her cheek changed not tint nor hue, and her words, clear and collected, seemed to contradict whatever the low murmurs of her betrothed might well be supposed to insinuate. But, even in *his* haviour, there was something which, had Lady Westborough been less contented than she was with the externals and surface of manner, would have alarmed her for her daughter. A cloud, sullen and gloomy, sate upon his brow, and his lip, alternately, quivered with something like scorn, or was compressed with a kind of stifled passion. Even in the exultation that sparkled in his eye, when he alluded to their approaching marriage, there was an expression that almost might have been termed fierce, and certainly was as little like the true orthodox ardour of "gentle swain," as Lady Flora's sad

and half unconscious coldness, resembled the diffident passion of the "blushing maiden."

"You have considerably past the time in which we expected you, my lord," said Lady Westborough, who, as a beauty herself, was a little jealous of the deference due to the beauty of her daughter.

"It is true," said Lord Ulswater, glancing towards the opposite glass, and smoothing his right eyebrow with his forefinger — "it is true, but I could not help it. I had a great deal of business to do with my troop—I have put them into a new manœuvre. Do you know, my lord (turning to the marquis) I think it very likely the soldiers may have some work on the —— of this month."

"Where, and wherefore?" asked Lord Westborough, whom a sudden twinge forced into the laconic.

"At W——. Some idle fellows hold a

meeting there on that day; and if I may judge by bills and advertisements, chalkings on the walls, and, more than all, popular rumour, I have no doubt but what riot and sedition are intended—the magistrates are terribly frightened. I hope we shall have some cutting and hewing —I have no patience with the rebellious dogs."

"For shame—for shame!" cried Lady Westborough, who, though a worldly, was by no means an unfeeling woman; "the poor people are misguided—they mean no harm."

Lord Ulswater smiled scornfully. "I never dispute upon politics, but at the head of my men," said he, and turned the conversation.

Shortly afterwards Lady Flora, complaining of indisposition, rose, left the apartment, and retired to her own room. There she sat, motionless, and white as death, for more than an hour. A day or two afterwards Miss Trevanion received the following letter from her:—

"Most heartily, most truly do I congratulate you, my dearest Eleanor, upon your approaching marriage. You may reasonably hope for all that happiness can afford; and though you do affect (for I do not think that you *feel*) a fear lest you should not be able to fix a character, volatile and light, like your lover's, yet, when I recollect his warmth of heart, and high sense, and your beauty, gentleness, charms of conversation, and purely disinterested love for one whose great worldly advantages might so easily bias or adulterate affection, I own that I have no dread for your future fate; no feeling that can at all darken the brightness of anticipation. Thank you, dearest, for the delicate kindness with which you allude to *my* destiny—me, indeed, you cannot congratulate as I can you. But do not grieve for me, my own generous Eleanor: if not happy, I shall, I trust, be at least contented. My poor father

implored me with tears in his eyes—my mother pressed my hand, but spoke not; and I—I whose affections were withered, and hopes strewn, should I not have been hard hearted indeed, if they had not wrung from me a consent? And, oh! should I not be utterly lost, if, in that consent which blessed them, I did not find something of peace and consolation?

"Yes, dearest, in two months, only two months, I shall be Lord Ulswater's wife; and when we meet, you shall look narrowly at me, and see if he or you have any right to complain of me.

"Have you seen Mr. Linden lately? Yet, do not answer the question: I ought not to cherish still that fatal, clinging, interest for one who has so utterly forgotten me. But I do rejoice in his prosperity: and when I hear his praises, and watch his career, I feel proud that I should once have loved him! Oh, how could he be so false, so cruel, in the very midst of his profes-

sions of undying, unswerving faith to me, at the very moment when I was ill, miserable, wasting my very heart, for anxiety on his account —and such a woman too! And had he loved me, even though his letter was returned, would not his conscience have told him he deserved it, and would he not have sought me out in person, and endeavoured to win from my folly his forgiveness. But without attempting to see me, or speak to me, or soothe a displeasure so natural, to leave the country in silence, almost in disdain; and when we met again, to greet me with coldness and hauteur, and never betray by word, sign, or look, that he had ever been to me more than the merest stranger! Fool, fool, that I am, to waste another thought upon him; but I will not, and ought not to do so. In two months I shall not even have the privilege of memory.

"I wish, Eleanor—for I assure you that I have tried and tried—that I could find any thing

to like and esteem (since love is out of the question) in this man, who seems so great, and, to me, so unaccountable a favourite with my parents. His countenance and voice are so harsh and stern; his manner at once so self-complacent and gloomy; his sentiments so narrow, even in their notions of honour; his very courage so savage, and his pride so constant and offensive, that I in vain endeavour to persuade myself of his virtues, and recur, at least, to the unwearying affection for me which he professes. It is true that he has been three times refused; that I have told him I cannot love him; that I have even owned former love to another: he still continues his suit, and by dint of long hope has at length succeeded. But at times I could almost think that he married me from very hate, rather than love, there is such an artificial smoothness in his stern voice, such a latent meaning in his eye; and when he thinks I have not noticed him,

I have, on suddenly turning towards him, perceived so dark and lowering an expression upon his countenance, that my heart has died within me for very fear.

"Had my mother been the least less kind, my father the least less urgent, I think, nay, I know, I could not have gained such a victory over myself as I have done in consenting to the day. But enough of this. I did not think I should have run on so long and so foolishly; but we, dearest, have been children, and girls, and women together: we have loved each other with such fondness and unreserve, that opening my heart to you seems only another phrase for thinking aloud.

"However, in two months I shall have no right even to thoughts—perhaps I may not even love you—till then, dearest Eleanor, I am, as ever, your affectionate and faithful friend,

"F. A."

Had Lord Westborough, indeed, been "less urgent," or her mother "less kind," nothing could ever have wrung from Lady Flora her consent to a marriage so ungenial and ill-omened. And it is worthy of observation, that while Isabel, whose lot, in this instance, somewhat resembled Lady Flora's, had been driven by harshness and force into a despair in which were hurried away and lost, as in a whirlpool, not only the prudence, but almost that feminacy of sex which her gentle and modest nature had, above all others, possessed, an entirely opposite persecution of love and kindness, and winning prayers, and silent looks, had won from Lady Flora, a consent to a marriage equally repugnant with that proposed to Isabel, and a compliance with wishes which were worse than torture to her soul. But it is also true—for as no two cases in the variety of human misfortune are exactly similar, so no just inference can be

drawn from comparison—that there were many differences in their relative positions.

Isabel knew that she was ardently and unceasingly loved; but Lady Flora believed in the indifference and ingratitude of our unfortunate Clarence; and were we too closely to analyse the motives of her concession, we might, perhaps, discover, lurking beneath them, somewhat of maiden shame, at cherishing a predilection for one who did not return it, and somewhat of that woman pique "for love requited not," which so often is the cause of actions for which not years of after penitence can atone.

Thrice had Lord Ulswater (then Lord Borodaile) been refused, before his final acceptation; and those who judge only from the ordinary effects of pride, would be astonished that he should have still persevered. But his pride was that deep-rooted feeling which, so far from being repelled by a single blow, fights stubbornly and

doggedly onward, till the battle is over, and its object gained. Now the moment he had resolved to address Lady Flora Ardenne, he had also resolved to win her. For three years, despite of a refusal, first gently, then more peremptorily urged, he fixed himself to her train. He gave out that he was her affianced. In all parties, in all places, he forced himself near her, unheeding alike of her frowns or indifference; and his rank, his hauteur, his fierceness of mien, and acknowledged courage, kept aloof all the less arrogant and hardy pretenders to Lady Flora's favour. For this, indeed, she rather thanked than blamed him; and it was the only thing which in the least reconciled her modesty to his advances, or her pride to his presumption.

He had been prudent as well as bold. The father he had served, and the mother he had won. Lord Westborough, addicted a little to politics, a good deal to show, and devotedly to

gaming, was often greatly and seriously embarrassed. Lord Ulswater, even during the life of his father, (who was lavishly generous to him) was provided with the means of relieving his intended father-in-law's necessity; and, caring little for money in comparison to a desired object, he was willing enough, we do not say to *bribe*, but to *influence* Lord Westborough's consent. These matters of arrangement were by no means concealed from the marchioness, who, herself ostentatious and profuse, was in no small degree benefited by them; and though they did not solely procure, yet they certainly contributed to conciliate her favour.

Few people are designedly and systematically wicked: even the worst find good motives for bad deeds; and are as intent upon discovering glosses for conduct, to deceive themselves, as to delude others. What wonder, then, that poor Lady Westborough, never too rigidly addicted

to self-examination, and viewing all things through a very worldly medium, saw only, in the alternate art and urgency employed against her daughter's most real happiness, the various praiseworthy motives of permanently disentangling Lady Flora from an unworthy attachment, of procuring for her an establishment proportioned to her rank, and a husband whose attachment, already shewn by such singular perseverance, was so likely to afford her every thing which, in Lady Westborough's eyes, constituted felicity.

All our friends, perhaps, desire our happiness; but, then, it must invariably be in their own way. What a pity that they do not employ the same zeal in making us happy *in ours!*

CHAPTER XIV.

"If thou criest after Knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;

"If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

"Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

Proverbs, c. xi. v. 3, 4, 5.

WHILE Clarence was thus misjudged by one whose affections and conduct he, in turn, naturally misinterpreted—while Lady Flora was alternately struggling against and submitting to the fate which Lady Westborough saw approach with gladness—the father with indifference, and the bridegroom with a pride that partook less of

rapture than revenge, our unfortunate lover was endeavouring to glean, from Mordaunt's conversation and example, somewhat of that philosophy so rare except in the theories of the civilized and the occasional practice of the barbarian, which, though it cannot give us a charm against misfortune, bestows, at least, upon us the energy to support it.

We have said already that when the first impression produced by Mordaunt's apparent pride and coldness wore away, it required little penetration to discover the benevolence and warmth of his mind. But none ignorant of his original dispositions, or the misfortunes of his life, could ever have pierced the depth of his self-sacrificing nature, or measured the height of his lofty and devoted virtue. Many men may, perhaps, be found, who will give up to duty a cherished wish, or even a darling vice, but few will ever renounce to it their rooted

tastes, or the indulgence of those habits which have almost become, by long use, their happiness itself. Naturally melancholy and thoughtful, feeding the sensibilities of his heart upon fiction, and though addicted to the cultivation of reason rather than fancy, having perhaps more of the deeper and acuter characteristics of the poet than those calm and half callous properties of nature, *supposed* to belong to the metaphysician and the calculating moralist, Mordaunt was above all men fondly addicted to solitude, and inclined to contemplations, less useful than profound. The untimely death of Isabel, whom he had loved with that love which is the vent of hoarded and passionate musings, long nourished upon romance, and lavishing the wealth of a soul that overflows with secreted tenderness, upon the *first* object that can bring reality to fiction, that event had not only darkened melancholy into gloom, but had made

loneliness still more dear to his habits by all the ties of memory, and all the consecrations of regret. The companionless wanderings — the midnight closet—the thoughts which, as Hume said of his own, could not exist in the world, but were all busy with life in seclusion: these were rendered sweeter than ever to a mind for which the ordinary objects of the world were now utterly loveless; and the musings of solitude had become, as it were, a rightful homage and offering to the dead! We may form, then, some idea of the extent to which, in Mordaunt's character, principle predominated over inclination, and regard for others over the love of self, when we see him tearing his spirit from its beloved retreats and abstracted contemplations, and devoting it to duties from which its fastidious and refined characteristics were particularly calculated to revolt. When we have considered his attachment to the hermitage,

we can appreciate the virtue which made him among the most active citizens in the great world; when we have considered the natural selfishness of grief, the pride of philosophy, the indolence of meditation, the eloquence of wealth, which says, "rest and toil not," and the temptation within, which says, "obey the voice;"—when we have considered these, we can perhaps do justice to the man who, sometimes on foot and in the coarsest attire, travelled from inn to inn, and from hut to hut; who made human misery the object of his search, and human happiness of his desire; who, breaking aside an aversion to rude contact, almost feminine in its extreme, voluntarily sought the meanest companions, and subjected himself to the coarsest intrusions; for whom the wail of affliction, or the moan of hunger, was as a summons which allowed neither hesitation nor appeal; who seemed possessed of an ubiquity for the purposes of good, almost

resembling that attributed to the wanderer in the magnificent fable of "Melmoth," for the temptations to evil; who, by a zeal and labour that brought to habit and inclination a thousand martyrdoms, made his life a very hour-glass, in which each sand was a good deed or a virtuous design.

Many plunge into public affairs, to which they have had a previous distaste, from the desire of losing the memory of a private affliction; but so far from wishing to heal the wounds of remembrance by the anodynes which society can afford, it was only in retirement that Mordaunt found the flowers from which balm could be distilled. Many are through vanity magnanimous, and benevolent from the selfishness of fame; but so far from seeking applause where he bestowed favour, Mordaunt had sedulously shrouded himself in darkness and disguise. And by that increasing propensity to quiet, so often found among those

addicted to lofty or abstruse contemplation, he had conquered the ambition of youth with the philosophy of a manhood that had forestalled the affections of age. Many, in short, have become great or good to the community by individual motives easily resolved into common and earthly elements of desire; but they who inquire diligently into human nature have not often the exalted happiness to record a character like Mordaunt's, actuated purely by a systematic principle of love, which covered mankind, as heaven does earth, with an atmosphere of light extending to the remotest corners, and penetrating the darkest recesses.

It was one of those violent and gusty evenings, which give to an English autumn something rude, rather than gentle, in its characteristics, that Mordaunt and Clarence sate together,

"And sowed the hours with various seeds of talk."

The young Isabel, the only living relic of the

departed one, sat by her father's side, upon the ground; and, though their discourse was far beyond the comprehension of her years, yet did she seem to listen with a quiet and absorbed attention. In truth, child as she was, she so loved, and almost worshipped, her father, that the very tones of his voice had in them a charm, which could always vibrate, as it were, to her heart, and hush her into silence; and that melancholy and deep, though somewhat low voice, when it swelled or trembled with *thought*—which in Mordaunt *was feeling*—made her sad, she knew not why; and when she heard it, she would creep to his side, and put her little hand on his, and look up at him with eyes, in whose tender and glistening blue the spirit of her mother seemed to float. She was serious, and thoughtful, and loving, beyond the usual capacities of childhood; perhaps her solitary condition, and habits of constant intercourse with one so grave

as Mordaunt, and who always, when not absent on his excursions of charity, loved her to be with him, had given to her mind a precocity of feeling, and tinctured the simplicity of infancy with what ought to have been the colours of after years. She was not inclined to the sports of her age—she loved, rather, and above all else, to sit by Mordaunt's side, and silently pore over some book, or feminine task, and to steal her eyes, every now and then, away from her employment, in order to watch his motions, or provide for whatever her vigilant kindness of heart imagined he desired. And often, when he saw her fairy and lithe form hovering about him, and attending on his wants, or her beautiful countenance glow with pleasure, when she fancied she supplied them, he almost believed that Isabel yet lived, though in another form, and that a love, so intense and holy as her's had been, might transmigrate, but could not perish.

The young Isabel had displayed a passion for music so early, that it almost seemed innate; and as, from the mild and wise education she received, her ardour had never been repelled on the one hand, or overstrained on the other, so, though she had but just passed her seventh year, she had attained to a singular proficiency in the art—an art that suited well with her lovely face, and fond feelings, and innocent heart; and it was almost heavenly, in the literal acceptation of the word, to hear her sweet, though childish voice, swell upon the still, pure evenings of summer, and her angelic countenance all rapt and brilliant, with the enthusiasm which her own melodies created.

Never had she borne the bitter breath of unkindness, or writhed beneath that customary injustice which punishes in others the sins of our own temper, and the varied fretfulness of caprice;—and so she had none of the fears and meannesses,

and *acted* untruths which so usually pollute and debase the innocence of childhood. But the promise of her ingenuous brow (over which the silken hair flowed parted into two streams of gold), and of the fearless but tender eyes, and of the quiet smile which sat for ever upon the rosy mouth, like Joy watching Love, was kept in its fullest extent by the mind, from which all thoughts, pure, kind, and guileless flowed, like waters from a well, which a spirit has made holy for its own dwelling.

On this evening, we have said that she sat by her father's side, and listened, though she only in part drank in its sense, to his conversation with his guest.

The room was of great extent, and surrounded with books, over which, at close intervals, the busts of the departed Great, and the immortal Wise looked down. There was the sublime beauty of Plato, the harsher and more earthly

countenance of Tully, the only Roman (except Lucretius) who might have been a Greek. There the mute marble gave the broad front of Bacon (itself a world)—and there the features of Locke shewed how the mind wears away the links of flesh, with the file of that thought which makes all things, *even the soul*, free! And over other departments of those works which remind us that man is made little lower than the angels, the stern face of the Florentine who sung of hell, contrasted with the quiet grandeur enthroned on the fair brow of the English poet—"blind but bold,"—and there the glorious, but genial countenance of him who has found, in all humanity a friend, conspicuous among sages and minstrels, claimed brotherhood with all.

The fire burned clear and high, casting a rich twilight (for there was no other light in the room) over that gothic chamber, and shining cheerily upon the varying countenance of Cla-

rence, and the more contemplative features of his host. In the latter might you see that care and thought had been harsh, but not unhallowed companions. In the lines which crossed his expanse of brow, time seemed to have buried many hopes; but his mien and air, if loftier, were gentler than in younger days; and though they had gained somewhat in dignity, had lost greatly in reserve.

There was in the old chamber, with its fretted roof and ancient "garniture," the various books which surrounded it, walls that the learned built to survive themselves, and in the marble likenesses of those for whom thought had won eternity, joined to the hour, the breathing quiet, and the *hearth light*, by whose solitary rays we love best in the eves of autumn to discourse on graver or subtler themes—there was in all this, a spell which seemed peculiarly to invite, and to harmonize with that tone of conversation,

some portions of which we are now about to relate.

"How loudly," said Clarence, "that last gust swept by—you remember that beautiful couplet in Tibullus—

> "'Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem,
> Et dominam tenero detinuisse sinu.'"*

"Ay," answered Mordaunt, with a scarcely audible sigh, "that is the feeling of the lover at the 'immites ventos,' but *we* sages of the lamp make our mistress Wisdom, and when the winds rage without, it is to *her* that we cling. See how from the same object different conclusions are drawn! the most common externals of nature, the wind and the wave, the stars and the heavens, the very earth on which we tread, never excite in different bosoms the same ideas. And it is from our own hearts, and not

* "Sweet on our couch to hear the winds above,
And cling with closer heart to her we love."

from an outward source, that we draw the hues which colour the web of our existence."

"It is true," answered Clarence. "You remember that in two specks of the moon the enamoured maiden perceived two unfortunate lovers, while the ambitious curate conjectured that they were the spires of a cathedral? But it is not only to our *feelings*, but also to our *reasonings*, that we give the colours which they wear. The moral, for instance, which to one man seems atrocious, to another is divine. On the tendency of the same work, what three people will agree? And how shall the most sanguine moralist hope to benefit mankind, when he finds that, by the multitude, his wisest endeavours to instruct are often considered but as instruments to pervert?"

"I believe," answered Mordaunt, "that it is from our ignorance that our contentions flow; we debate with strife and with wrath, with

bickering and with hatred, but of the thing debated *upon* we remain in the profoundest darkness. Like the labourers of Babel, while we endeavour in vain to express our meaning to each other, the fabric by which, for a common end, we would have ascended to heaven from the ills of earth, remains for ever unadvanced and incomplete. Let us hope that Knowledge is the universal language which shall re-unite us. As, in their sublime allegory, the Romans signified that only through virtue we arrived at honour, so let us believe that only through knowledge can we arrive at virtue!"

"And yet," said Clarence, "that seems a melancholy truth for the mass of the people, who have no time for the researches of wisdom."

"Not so much so as at first we might imagine," answered Mordaunt: "the few smooth all paths for the many. The precepts of knowledge it is difficult to extricate from error; but,

once discovered, they gradually pass into maxims: and thus what the sage's life was consumed in acquiring, become the acquisition of a moment to posterity. Knowledge is like the atmosphere—in order to dispel the vapour and dislodge the frost, our ancestors felled the forest drained the marsh, and cultivated the waste, and we now breathe, without an effort, in the purified air and the chastened climate, the result of the labour of generations and the progress of ages! As, to-day, the common mechanic may equal in science, however inferior in genius, the friar* whom his contemporaries feared as a magician, so the opinions which now startle as well as astonish, may be received hereafter as acknowledged axioms, and pass into ordinary practice. We cannot even tell how far the

* Roger Bacon.

sanguine* theories of certain philosophers deceive them when they anticipate, for future ages, a knowledge which shall bring perfection to the mind, baffle the diseases of the body, and even protract to a date now utterly unknown the final destination of life: for Wisdom is a palace of which only the vestibule has been entered; nor can we guess what treasures are hid in those chambers, of which the experience of the past can afford us neither analogy nor clue."

"It was, then," said Clarence, who wished to draw his companion into speaking of himself, "it was, then, from your addiction to studies not ordinarily made the subject of acquisition, that you date (pardon me) your generosity,

* See Condorcet on the Progress of the Human Mind: written some years after the supposed date of this conversation, but in which there is a slight, but eloquent and affecting view of the philosophy to which Mordaunt refers.

your devotedness, your feeling for others, and your indifference to self?"

"You flatter me," said Mordaunt, modestly; (and we may be permitted to crave attention to his reply, since it unfolds the secret springs of a character so singularly good and pure)—"you flatter me; but I will answer you, as if you had put the question without the compliment; nor, perhaps, will it be wholly uninstructive, as it will certainly be new, to sketch, without recurrence to events, or what I may call exterior facts, a brief and progressive history of one human mind.*

* Mr. Reader, although we will own to thee that some trifling pains have been lavished on the following remarks, in order to render them as little tedious as their nature will allow of, yet we have, also, in our exceeding care for thy entertainment, so contrived it, that thou mayest skip the whole, without penalty of losing a single atom connected with the tale, which is, indeed, all that in reason thou canst be expected to interest thyself about. So, leaving choice to thy discretion, we give our hint the elegant and forcible phraseology of the illustrious Will Honeycomb.

"Sir, I know you hate long things—but if you like it you may contract it—or how you will—but I think it has a moral in it."

"Our first æra of life is under the influence of the primitive feelings: we are pleased, and we laugh; hurt, and we weep: we vent our little passions the moment they are excited; and so much of novelty have we to *perceive*, that we have little leisure to *reflect*. By-and-by, fear teaches us to restrain our feelings: when displeased, we seek to revenge the displeasure, and are punished; we find the excess of our joy, our sorrow, our anger, alike considered criminal, and chidden into restraint. From harshness we become acquainted with deceit: the promise made is not fulfilled, the threat not executed, the fear falsely excited, and the hope wilfully disappointed: we are surrounded by systematized delusion, and we imbibe the contagion.

"From being forced into concealing the thoughts which we do conceive, we begin to affect those which we do not: so early do we learn the two main tasks of life, to suppress and

to feign, that our memory will not carry us beyond that period of artifice to a state of nature when the twin principles of veracity and belief were so strong as to lead the philosophers of a modern school into the error of terming them innate.*

"It was with a mind restless and confused—feelings which were alternately chilled and counterfeited, (the necessary results of my first tuition,) that I was driven to mix with others of my age. They did not like me, nor do I blame them. '*Les manières que l'on néglige comme de petites choses, sont souvent ce qui fait que les hommes décident de vous en bien ou en mal.*' Manner is acquired so imperceptibly, that we have given its origin to nature, as we do the origin of all else for which our ignorance can find no other source. Mine was unprepossess-

* Reid on the Human Mind.

ing: I was disliked, and I returned the feeling; I sought not, and I was shunned. Then I thought that all were unjust to me, and I grew bitter, and sullen, and morose: I cased myself in the stubbornness of pride, I pored over the books which spoke of the worthlessness of man, and I indulged the discontent of myself by brooding over the frailties of my kind.

"My passions were strong—they told me to *suppress* them. The precept was old, and seemed wise—I attempted to enforce it. I had already begun, in earlier infancy, the lesson: I had now only to renew it. Fortunately I was diverted from this task, or my mind, in conquering its passions, would have conquered its powers. I learnt, in after lessons, that the passions are never to be suppressed: they are to be directed; and when directed, rather to be strengthened than subdued.

"Observe how a word may influence a life:

a man whose opinion I esteemed, made of me the casual and trite remark, that 'my nature was one of which it was impossible to augur evil or good, it might be extreme in either.' This observation roused me into thought: could I indeed be all that was good or evil? had I the choice, and could I hesitate which to choose? but what was good and what was evil? that seemed the most difficult inquiry.

"I asked, and received no satisfactory reply;—in the words of Erasmus—'*totius negotii caput ac fontem ignorant, divinant, ac delirant omnes*:' so I resolved myself to inquire and to decide. I subjected to my scrutiny, the moralist and the philosopher: I saw that on all sides they disputed, but I saw also that they *grew virtuous in the dispute*; they uttered much that was absurd about the origin of good, but much more that was exalted in its praise: and I never rose from any work which treated ably upon morals,

whatever were its peculiar opinions, but I felt my breast enlightened, and my mind ennobled by my studies. The professor of one sect commanded me to avoid the dogmatist of another, as the propagator of moral poison; and the dogmatist retaliated on the professor; but I avoided neither: I read both, and turned all 'into honey and fine gold.' No inquiry into wisdom, however superficial, is undeserving attention. The vagaries of the idlest fancy will often chance, as it were, upon the most useful discoveries of truth, and so serve as a guide to after and to slower disciples of wisdom; even as the peckings of birds, in an unknown country, indicate to the adventurous seaman the best and the safest fruits.

"From the *works* of men I looked into their *lives*, and I found that there was a vast difference (though I am not aware that it has before been remarked), between those who cultivated *a talent*,

and those who cultivated *the mind;* I found that the mere men of genius, were often erring or criminal in their lives; but that vice or crime in the disciples of philosophy, were strikingly unfrequent and rare. The extremest culture of reason had not, it is true, been yet carried far enough to preserve the labourer from follies of opinion, but a moderate culture had been sufficient to deter him from the vices of life. And only to the sons of Wisdom, as of old to the sages of the East, seemed given the unerring star, which, through the travail of Earth, and the clouds of Heaven, *led them at the last to their God!*

"When I gleaned this fact from biography I paused, and said—'Then must there be something excellent in Wisdom, if it can, even in its most imperfect disciples, be thus beneficial to morality.' Pursuing this sentiment, I redoubled my researches, and behold the object of my quest was won! I had before sought a

satisfactory answer to the question, 'What is Virtue?' from men of a thousand tenets, and my heart had rejected all I had received. 'Virtue,' said some, and my soul bowed reverently to the dictate, 'Virtue is Religion.' I heard and humbled myself before the Divine Book. Let me trust that I did not humble myself in vain! But the dictate satisfied less than it awed; for, either it limited Virtue to the mere belief, or, by extending it to the practice, of Religion, it extended also inquiry to the method in which the practice should be applied. But with the first interpretation of the dictate, who could rest contented?—for, while in the perfect enforcement of the tenets of our faith, all virtue may be found, so in the passive, and the mere belief in its divinity, we find only an engine as applicable to evil as to good:—the torch which should illumine the altar has also lighted the stake, and the zeal of the persecutor has been no

less sincere than the heroism of the martyr. Rejecting, therefore, this interpretation, I accepted the other: I felt in my heart, and I rejoiced as I felt it, that in the practice of Religion the body of all virtue could be found. But, in that conviction, had I at once an answer to my inquiries?—Could the mere desire of good be sufficient to attain it—and was the *attempt* at virtue synonymous with *success?* On the contrary, have not those most desirous of obeying the precepts of God often sinned the most against their spirit, and has not zeal been frequently the most ardent, when crime was the most *rife?** But what, if neither sincerity nor

* There can be no doubt that they who exterminated the Albigenses, established the Inquisition, lighted the fires at Smithfield, were actuated, not by a desire to do evil, but (monstrous as it may seem) to do good, not to counteract, but to enforce what they believed the wishes of the Almighty; so that a good intention, without the enlightenment to direct it to a fitting object, may be as pernicious to human happiness as one the most fiendish. We are told of a whole people, who used to murder their guests, not from ferocity or interest, but from

zeal were sufficient to constitute goodness—what, if in the breasts of the best-intentioned, crime had been fostered, the more dangerously, because the more disguised—what ensued?—That the religion which they professed, they believed, they adored, *they had also misunderstood*; and that the precepts to be drawn from the Holy Book, they had darkened by their ignorance, or perverted by their passions! Here, then, at once, my enigma was solved: here, then, at once, I was led to the goal of my inquiry!—Ignorance, and the perversion of passion, are but the same thing—though under different names; for, only by our ignorance are our passions perverted. Therefore, what followed?—that, if by ignorance the greatest of God's gifts had been turned to evil, knowledge alone was the light by which even the pages of Religion should be read.

the pure and praiseworthy motive *of obtaining the good qualities*, which they believed, by the murder of the deceased, devolved upon them!

It followed, that the Providence that knew the nature it had created should be constantly in exercise, and that only through labour comes improvement, had wisely ordained that we should toil even for the blessing of its holiest and clearest laws. It had given us, in Religion, as in this magnificent world, treasures and harvests which might be called forth in incalculable abundance; but had decreed that through our exertions only *should* they be called forth;—a palace more gorgeous than the palaces of enchantment was before us, but its chambers were a labyrinth which required a clue.

"What was that clue? Was it to be sought for in the corners of earth, or was it not beneficently centred in ourselves? Was it not the exercise of a power easy for us to use, if we would dare to do so? Was it not the simple exertion of the discernment granted to us for all else?—Was it not the exercise of our reason?

'Reason!' cried the Zealot, 'pernicious and hateful instrument, it is fraught with peril to yourself and to others; do not think for a moment of employing an engine so fallacious and so dangerous.' But I listened not to the Zealot: could the steady and bright torch which, even where the Star of Bethlem had withheld its diviner light, had guided some patient and unwearied steps to the very throne of Virtue, become but a deceitful meteor to him who kindled it *for the aid of Religion*, and in an eternal cause? Could it be perilous to task our reason, even to the utmost, in the investigation of the true utility and hidden wisdom of the works of God, when God himself had ordained that only through *some* exertion of our reason should we know either from Nature or Revelation that he himself existed? 'But,' cried the Zealot again, 'but mere mortal wisdom teaches men presumption,

and presumption, doubt.' 'Pardon me,' I answered, 'it is not Wisdom, but Ignorance, which teaches men presumption; *Genius* may be sometimes arrogant, but nothing is so diffident as *Knowledge*.' 'But,' resumed the Zealot, 'they accustomed to subtle inquiries may dwell only on the minutiæ of faith—inexplicable because useless to explain, and argue from those minutiæ against the grand and universal truth.' 'Pardon me again: it is the petty, not the enlarged mind, which prefers casuistry to conviction; it is the confined and short sight of Ignorance, which, unable to comprehend the great bearings of truth, pries only into its narrow and obscure corners, occupying itself in scrutinizing the atoms of a part, while the eagle eye of Wisdom contemplates in its widest scale, the luminous majesty of the whole. Survey our faults, our errors, our vices—fearful and fertile field! trace them to their causes—all those causes re-

solve themselves into *one*—ignorance!—For, as we have already seen, that from this source flow the abuses of Religion, so, also, from this source flow the abuses of all other blessings—of talents, of riches, of power: for we abuse things, either because we know not their real use, or, because, with an equal blindness, we imagine the abuse more adapted to our happiness. But as ignorance, then, is the sole spring of evil—so, as the antidote to ignorance, is knowledge, *it necessarily* follows that, were we *consummate* in knowledge, we should be perfect in good. He, therefore, who *retards the progress of intellect, countenances crime—nay, to a state, is the greatest of criminals*—while he who circulates that mental light, more precious than the visual, is the holiest improver, and the surest benefactor of his race! Nor let us believe, with the dupes of a shallow policy, that there exists upon the earth *one* prejudice that can be called salutary, or *one* error

beneficial to perpetuate. As the petty fish, which is fabled to possess the property of arresting the progress of the largest vessel to which it clings, even so may *a single prejudice, unnoticed or despised, more than the adverse blast, or the dead calm, delay the Bark of Knowledge in the vast seas of Time.*

"It is true that the sanguineness of philanthropists may have carried them too far; it is true (for the experiment has not yet been made) that God *may* have denied to us, in this state, the consummation of knowledge, and the consequent perfection in good; but because we cannot be perfect, are we to resolve we will be evil? One step in knowledge is one step from sin: one step from sin is one step nearer to heaven. Oh! never let us be deluded by those, who, for *political* motives, would adulterate the divinity of *religious* truths: never let us believe that our Father in Heaven rewards

most the one talent unemployed, or that prejudice, and indolence, and folly, find the most favour in His sight: never let us believe that we shall acknowledge His power the least when we can best survey it; or that, whether we trace its operation through the springs of the subtle heart, or unravel its wonders in the intricate womb of earth, or follow its grandeur from hence to the stars of unfathomable space, we shall have less cause to adore His wisdom, than if we remained unable to comprehend its smallest wonder—or that we should lose our reverence for His greatness, by ascertaining the vastness of its extent. Oh! never let us bow to such an error!—never let us give so powerful a sanction to guilt, as to favour the obscurity and darkness which are at once its origin and retreat! Never let us believe that *a single drop* of ignorance has flowed to us from the fountain of all knowledge! Has not the Inspired One proclaimed to us the

reverse? Have we not been told that he 'who sinneth against wisdom wrongeth his own soul?' Has not the very heathen bequeathed to us an estimate of the Deity, which only Inspiration can excel? And when Plato so sublimely said, 'TRUTH IS THE BODY OF GOD,' did he not add, in a still sublimer spirit, 'AND LIGHT IS HIS SHADOW?'

"Persuaded, then, that knowledge contained the key to virtue, it was to knowledge that I applied. The first grand lesson which it taught me, was the solution of a phrase most hacknied —least understood, *viz*, '*common sense*.' It is in the Portico of the Greek sage* that that phrase has received its legitimate explanation; it is there we are taught that 'common sense' signifies 'the sense of the common interest.' Yes! it is the most beautiful truth in morals, that we have no such thing as a distinct or

* Κοινονοη μοσύνη—Sensus communis.

divided interest from our race. In their welfare is ours; and, by choosing the broadest paths to effect their happiness, we choose the surest and the shortest to our own. As I read and pondered over these truths, I was sensible that a great change was working a fresh world out of the former materials of my mind. My passions, which before I had checked into uselessness, or exerted to destruction, now started forth in a nobler shape, and prepared for a new direction· instead of urging me to individual aggrandizement, they panted for universal good, and coveted the reward of Ambition, only for the triumphs of Benevolence.

"This is one stage of Virtue—I cannot resist the belief that there is a higher: it is when we begin to love virtue, not for its objects, but itself. For there are in knowledge these two excellencies:—first, that it offers to every man, the most selfish, and the most exalted, his pecu-

liar inducement to good. It says to the former, 'Serve mankind, and you serve yourself;'—to the latter, 'In choosing the best means to secure your own happiness, you will have the sublime inducement of promoting the happiness of mankind.'

"The second excellence of Knowledge is, that even the selfish man, when he has once begun to love Virtue from little motives, loses the motives as he increases the love: and at last worships the deity, where before he only coveted the gold upon its altar. And thus, I learned to love Virtue solely for its own beauty. I said with one who, among much dross, has many particles of ore, 'If it be not estimable in itself, I can see nothing estimable in following it for the sake of a bargain.'

"I looked round the world, and saw often Virtue in rags, and Vice in purple: the former conduces to happiness, it is true, but the happi-

ness lies *within*, and not in externals. I contemned the deceitful folly with which writers have termed it poetical justice, to make the good ultimately prosperous in wealth, honour, fortunate love, or successful desires. Nothing false, even in poetry, can be just; and that pretended moral is of all the falsest. Virtue is not more exempt than Vice from the ills of fate, but it contains within itself always an energy to resist them, and sometimes an anodyne to soothe—to repay your quotation from Tibullus,

"'Crura sonant ferro—sed canit inter opus!'

"When in the depths of my soul I set up that divinity of this nether earth, which Brutus never really understood, if, because unsuccessful in its efforts, he doubted its existence, I said in the proud prayer with which I worshipped it, 'Poverty may humble my lot, but it shall not debase thee; Temptation may shake my

nature, but not the rock on which thy temple is based; Misfortune may wither all the hopes that have blossomed around thine altar, but I will sacrifice dead leaves when the flowers are no more. Though all that I have loved perish—all that I have coveted fade away, I may murmur at fate, but I will have no voice but that of homage for thee! Nor, while thou smilest upon my way, would I exchange with the loftiest and happiest of thy foes!" More bitter than aught of what I then dreamed, have been my trials, *but I have fulfilled my vow!*

"I believe that alone to be a true description of Virtue, which makes it all-sufficient to itself—that alone a just portraiture of its excellence, which does not lessen its internal power by exaggerating its outward advantages, nor degrade its nobility by dwelling only on its rewards. The grandest moral of ancient lore has ever seemed to me that which the picture

of Prometheus affords: in whom neither the shaking earth, nor the rending heaven, nòr the rock without, nor the vulture within, could cause regret for past benevolence, or terror for future evil, or envy, even amidst tortures, for the dishonourable prosperity of his insulter!* Who, that has glowed over this exalted picture, will tell us, that we must make Virtue prosperous in order to allure to it, or clothe Vice with misery in order to revolt us from its image? Oh! who, on the contrary, would not learn to adore Virtue, from the bitterest sufferings of such a votary, a hundred-fold more than he would learn to love Vice from the gaudiest triumphs of its most fortunate disciples?"

Something there was in Mordaunt's voice and air, and the impassioned glow of his countenance, that, long after he had ceased, thrilled

* Mercury.—See the Prometheus of Æschylus.

in Clarence's heart "like the remembered tone of a mute lyre." And when a subsequent event led him at rash moments to doubt whether Virtue was indeed the chief good, Linden recalled the words of that night, and the enthusiasm with which they were uttered, repented that in his doubt he had wronged the truth, and felt that there *is* a power in the deep heart of man to which even Destiny is submitted!

END OF VOL. III.

LONDON:
SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.